





A N
E X P O S I T I O N
O F T H E
N E W T E S T A M E N T,

Both DOCTRINAL and PRACTICAL:

IN WHICH IS INSERTED

- I. A correct Copy of the Sacred Text, and the Genuine Sense thereof given;
- II. The Truths of the Christian Religion are set in a plain and clear Light;
- III. Difficult Places explained;
- IV. Seeming Contradictions reconciled; and
- V. Whatever is Material in the Various Readings, and the several Oriental Versions, is Observed.

T H E W H O L E

Illustrated and Confirmed from the most Ancient JEWISH WRITINGS.

By J O H N G I L L, D. D.

A N E W E D I T I O N, C O R R E C T E D.

V O L. II.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR GEORGE KEITH, IN GRACECHURCH-STREET.

MDCCLXXIV.

EXPOSITION

OF THE

NEW TESTAMENT

BOTH DOCTRINAL AND PRACTICAL

BY JOHN C. L. D.D.

I. A correct copy of the Greek Text, and the Genuine Sense thereof given;
II. The Truths of the Christian Religion are set in a plain and clear light;
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THE SECOND

EDITION, CORRECTED AND ENLARGED, WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES.

BY JOHN C. L. D.D.

A NEW EDITION, CORRECTED.

VOL. II.

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EXPOSITION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

S. L U K E.

THE writer of this Gospel, **LUKE**, has by some been thought, as Origen relates (*a*), to be the same with *Lucius*, mentioned in *Romans* xvi. 21. but he seems rather to be, and without doubt is, *Luke the beloved physician*, who was a companion of the apostle Paul in great part of his travels in the Gentile world: he came with him to Jerusalem, and from thence accompanied him to Rome, and continued with him when in prison, and was with him to the last; see *Acts* xvi. 10, 11, &c. *Col.* iv. 14. *2 Timothy* iv. 11. *Philemon* 24. Jerom (*b*), and others say, he was a physician of Antioch in Syria; where it may be the apostle Paul met with him, and might be the happy instrument of his conversion; so that he seems to be by nation a Syrian, as Jerom calls him (*c*). Grotius thinks his name is Roman, and that it is the contraction of Lucilius. It is not an Hebrew name, but might be in common use in Syria; for though the Jews reckon, *לוקא* *Lukus*, among foreign names, yet they say (*d*) it was a very illustrious one, and well known to them, as it may well be thought to be, if Syriac, the language being spoke by them: and many Jews lived in Syria, and particularly in Antioch. Some say that this Gospel was written by the advice, and assistance, and under the direction of the apostle Paul, as the Gospel according to *Mark* was by that of Peter; though the following preface does not seem so well to accord with this. Eusebius says (*e*) that it was the sense of the ancients, that whenever the apostle Paul makes mention of *his Gospel*, he intends this according to *Luke*. The time of the writing of it is not certain; some say it was written in the fifteenth year after the ascension of our Lord; others in the twenty-second; and others in the twenty-seventh. It is commonly thought to have been written after the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, according to the order in which it stands; but this is rejected by some learned men, who rather think that Luke wrote first of all: and indeed, there are some things in his preface which look as if there had not, as yet, been any authentic account published, at least which was

(a) In Rom. xvi. 21.

(b) Catalog. Script. Eccles. §. 17.

(d) T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 11. 2. & Gloss. in ib.

fol. 91. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 3. c. 4.

(c) Præfat. in Luc.

(e) Ubi supra.

was come to the knowledge of this Evangelist. The place where he wrote it is also uncertain. Jerom says (*f*), he wrote it in the parts of Achaia, perhaps at Corinth: according to the titles prefixed to the Syriac and Persic versions, he wrote it in Alexandria: the former of these runs thus; "The Gospel of Luke, the Evangelist, which he spake and published in Greek in Alexandria the great." And the latter thus; "The Gospel of Luke, which he wrote in the Greek tongue in Alexandria of Egypt." However, it is agreed on all hands, that it is genuine, and of divine inspiration. Eusebius (*g*) relates, that it was affirmed by some, that this Gospel, together with those of Matthew and Mark, were brought to the apostle John, who approved of them, and bore witness to the truth in them.

CHAP. I.

Luke's preface, v. 1—4. The parentage and life of Zacharias and Elisabeth, v. 5—7. An angel appeareth to Zacharias in the temple, and promiseth him a son, v. 8—14. Directions concerning his education, with a description of his office, v. 15—17. Zacharias not believing, is struck dumb for a season, v. 18—20. Elisabeth conceiveth, v. 21—25. The angel Gabriel visiteth the virgin Mary, and telleth her she shall conceive and bring forth a son, which is the Son of God, v. 26—35. and declareth to her, how that her sister Elisabeth shall likewise bring forth a son, v. 36, 37. Mary goeth to Elisabeth, who joyfully received and blessed her, v. 38—45. Mary praiseth God, v. 46—55. Elisabeth bringeth forth a son, v. 56—58. who being circumcised, is called John, v. 56—63. Zacharias recovereth his speech, and prophesieth of Christ and of John, v. 64—79. John growing strong in spirit, dwelleth in the wilderness, v. 80.

IN FORASMUCH as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

From hence, to the end of verse 4, is a preface of the Evangelist to his Gospel, setting forth the reasons of his writing it; and which he wrote and sent to the excellent Theophilus, for the further confirmation of him in the faith of Christ. It seems that many had took in hand, or attempted

To set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us] That is, they undertook to write and publish a very particular and exact narrative of the birth, life, actions, doctrines, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ; things which Luke, and other Christians, had the fullest and strongest evidence, and were confidently assured of, and most firmly believed, even with a full assurance of faith. By these many, he cannot mean the authentic historians of evangelical facts, as Matthew and Mark; for they two cannot, with any propriety, be called many; and besides, it is

not so very clear and certain a point, that they had, as yet, wrote their Gospels; nor would this Evangelist suggest any deficiency, weakness, and inaccuracy in them, as he seems to do: nor does he intend such spurious writers as the authors of the Gospels according to the Nazarenes, Hebrews, and Egyptians; of Nicodemus, Thomas, Matthias, and of the twelve Apostles; and still less, the Gospels of Cerinthus, Basilides, and other heretics; since these would not have passed without a censure from him, for the falsehood, fabulous and trifling stuff in them, as well as for the wicked and heretical opinions propagated by them; and besides, these pieces were not extant when this Gospel was written: but he seems to design some honest and well-meaning Christians, who undertook to write, and did write an account of the above things, which were firmly believed by all; and which they took from the apostles and first ministers of the Gospel, from their sermons and discourses, and from conversation with them; and which they committed to writing, partly to help their own memories, and partly for the benefit of others; in which, no doubt, they acted an upright part, though attended with weakness: wherefore, the Evangelist does not censure them as false, wicked, and heretical, nor approve of them as divine and perfect; for though they honestly meant, and designed well, yet there might be many things collected by them, which were impertinent, and not proper to be transmitted to posterity; and what might be wrote with great inaccuracy and deficiency, and in a stile the holy Ghost thought improper things of this kind should be delivered in: and therefore the Evangelist, moved and inspired by the Spirit of God, set about the following work, and under the same influence compleated it. The phrase, *ἀνατάξασθαι δι᾽ ἑκείνου*, *to set forth in order a declaration*, is, as Dr Lightfoot observes out of the Talmud (*a*), agreeable to the Jewish way of speaking. "R. Chasidai said to one of the Rabbins, who was, *מסדר אגרות* "setting in order a declaration" before him, &c. or relating in order a "story before him."

2 Even

(*f*) Prefat. in Luc.

(*g*) Eccl. Hist. l. 3. c. 24.

(*a*) T. Bab. Succa, fol. 53. 1.

2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word;

By whom the Evangelist means, as appears, from the after-description of them, the twelve Apostles, and seventy Disciples; who handed down to others the accounts of the birth, life, and death of Christ; and according to which the above Christians proposed to write:

Which from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word] Either of the Gospel, or rather of Christ himself, the eternal Word of God; for from the beginning of Christ's preaching the Gospel, or as soon as he entered upon his public ministry, he called his apostles, as Simon, Andrew, James, John, &c. and afterwards seventy disciples; who were eyewitnesses of him, of the truth of his incarnation, and of his ministry and miracles; saw, and conversed with him after his resurrection from the dead, and beheld his ascension to heaven; and were ministers that were called, qualified, and sent out by him, and waited on him, and served him. This shews, as is by some rightly observed, that Luke was not one of the seventy disciples, as some (b) have thought, and as the title of this Gospel to the Arabic version of it, expresses; for then he would have been an eyewitness himself: nor did he take his account from the apostle Paul; for he was not a minister of the word from the beginning, but was as one born out of due time.

3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,

Being moved to it by the holy Ghost; for he did not undertake this work of himself, merely by the motion of his own will, but was influenced, and directed to it by the Spirit of God, as well as by him assisted in it:

Having had perfect understanding of all things] Relating to the subject of this Gospel, concerning the conception, birth, ministry, baptism, and death of John the Baptist; concerning the conception, birth, private and public life of Christ, together with his sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension. The Syriac and Perfic versions refer the word *all* to persons, to the eyewitnesses and ministers of the word; rendering the clause thus, "who have been studiously near to them all:" and both senses may be taken in, and the meaning be, that Luke had diligently sought after, and had attained unto a perfect knowledge of all the affairs of Christ; having studiously got into the company

of, and intimately conversed with all, or as many as he could, who had seen Christ in the flesh; and were, from the very first of his ministry, attendants on him; that he might have the most certain and accurate account of things, that could be come at:

From the very first] And to the last; from the conception of John, the forerunner of the Messiah, which is higher than any other Evangelist goes, to the ascension of Christ; though some choose to render the word here used, *from above*, as it may be, and sometimes is; and may signify, that the Evangelist had his perfect knowledge of things by a revelation from above, by divine inspiration; and this moved him to write, and which he mentions, that Theophilus to whom he writes, and every other reader, may depend with certainty on what is said in it. This clause is omitted in the Syriac, Arabic, and Perfic versions, but is in all copies, and by all means to be retained. This being the case, these reasons prevailed upon him, as he says,

To write unto thee, in order, most excellent Theophilus] Which regards not so much the order of time, which he does not always strictly observe, as the particulars of things, related in order, and with great exactness: who this Theophilus was, to whom he writes his Gospel, cannot be said; by his title, which is such as was given to governors of provinces, as to Felix and Festus, *Acts* xxiii. 26. and chapter xxvi. 25. he seems to be, or to have been, a civil magistrate in some high office; for though not many rich and mighty, yet some have been, and are, called by grace. Theophylact (c) says, he was of the order of the senators, and perhaps a nobleman, or prince: however, this name was not a general name for every lover of God, as the word signifies, as Salvian (d) thought; but the name of a particular man, who believed in Christ, and was an acquaintance of Luke's; though Epiphanius (e) makes a doubt of it which it should be.

4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

The end the Evangelist had in writing this Gospel, and sending it to Theophilus, was, that he might be more strongly assured of, and more firmly established in the truths of the Gospel. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render it "that thou mightest know the truth;" that is, the certain truth of things: the truth he did in some measure know before, but Luke's view was, that he might have a more certain knowledge of it; both truth, and the certainty of it may be intended: so

(b) Epiphanius contra Hæreses, l. 2. Hæresis 51. Theophylact, in Argument, in Luc.

(c) Ut supra. (d) Salvian, Epist. p. 337. (e) Ut supra.

to the Hebrew word, אמת signifies both *truth* and *firmness*; and the word here used signifies such a certain evidence of things, as may be safely depended on; even of things,

Wherein thou hast been instructed] Or catechized; signifying, that he had been hitherto taught, as a catechumen, the rudiments, and first principles of the Christian religion, by word of mouth; and he had taken them in upon the evidence they came with, and the authority of those that instructed him in them; and now he sent him in writing this account, to increase his knowledge, strengthen his faith, and to give him such a sure proof of things, as might preserve him safe in the belief of them, from all doubting and defection. Having finished his preface, he proceeds to the narrative itself, which begins as follows.

5 **T**HERE was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the house of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.

This was Herod the son of Antipater, sometimes called Herod the great, and is rightly here said to be the king of Judea; for, by deputation from the Roman emperor, he had the government of all Judea, which upon his death was divided among his sons. The phrase, *in the days of*, is an eastern way of speaking; see *Gen. xiv. 1. Ruth i. 1. 1 Sam. xvii. 12.* and intends the time of his reign; in which there was

A certain priest named Zacharias] A name famous among the Jews, for an high priest, who was slain by them in the court of the temple, *2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21.* and for one of the later prophets, *Zech. i. 1.* who were of this name. This man, the father of John the Baptist, was not an high priest, as this character of him, and the work afterwards ascribed to him, shew; though he has been thought to be so by some; and John himself is so called by the Jews (*f*): he was

Of the course of Abia] The Ethiopic version reads, "in the days of Abia:" and it has been the opinion of some, that Zacharias and Abia were two priests, who performed their ministry in succession, one after another; one ministered one time, and another at another time; but such betray their ignorance, both of scripture and of Jewish affairs. In David's time, there was a division of the sons of Aaron into *twenty-four* orders, or courses; and this of Abia was one, and the *eighth* of them; see *1 Chron. xxiv. 1, 4, 10.* The account the Jews give (*g*) of this matter, and in which they are not

agreed, is this: "Says Rab Chama bar Guria, "says Rab, Moses ordered for the Israelites eight "courses, four from Eleazar, and four from Ithamar; Samuel came and made them sixteen; "David came and made them twenty-four.—It "is a tradition that Moses ordered for the Israelites, sixteen courses, eight from Eleazar, and "eight from Ithamar; and when the children of "Eleazar increased above the children of Ithamar, "they divided them, and appointed them twenty-four." The account, as given by Maimonides, is as follows (*h*): "Moses, our master, divided the "priests into eight courses, four from Eleazar, "and four from Ithamar, and so they were until "Samuel the prophet; and in the days of Samuel, "he and David the king divided them into twenty-four courses; and over every course one head "was appointed, and they went up to Jerusalem "to the service of the course every week; and "from sabbath to sabbath they changed; one "course went out, and another came in, till they "finished, and returned again." Now of these there were but four courses returned from the Babylonish captivity, as appears from *Ezra ii. 36—39.* and with this the Jewish accounts agree (*i*). "The Rabbins teach, that four courses came up "from the captivity, Jedaiah, Harim, Pashur, and "Immer; the prophets that were among them "stood up, and divided them, and appointed four "and twenty lots, and put them into a box: Jedaiah came and took his lot, and the lot of his "companions, six; Harim came and took his lot, "and the lot of his companions, six; and so "Pashur and Immer: and so the prophets that "were among them taught, that if Jehoiarib, the "first course, came up from captivity, he should "not drive away Jedaiah out of his place; but "Jedaiah should be the principal, and Jehoiarib an "appendix to him." Now, though the course of Abia did not return from captivity, yet its order and name were retained as the rest of the courses, being divided between these four by whom they were supplied; and therefore Zacharias is not said to be of the posterity of Abia, but of his course. To these courses there were added as many stations; and what they were, and their use, may be learnt from what follows (*k*). "The former prophets ordered four and twenty courses; and to every "course there was a station at Jerusalem; consisting of priests, Levites, and Israelites: and when "the time came for the course to go up, the "priests and Levites went up to Jerusalem, but the "Israelites, which were in that course, gathered "themselves

(*f*) Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1, fol. 25, 2.

(*g*) T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 27, 1.

(*h*) Hilch. Cele Hamikdash, c. 4, §. 3. (*i*) T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 27, 1, 2. Erachin, fol. 12, 2. & 13, 1. T. Hieros. Taanith, fol. 68, 1. (*k*) Misn. Taanith, c. 4, §. 2, 3.

“ themselves to their cities, and read in the history
 “ of the creation ; and the men of the station fast-
 “ ed four days in the week, from the second day
 “ to the fifth.” The sense of which, according
 to their commentators (l), is, that these stations
 were substituted in the room of, and represented all
 Israel ; and their business was to give themselves
 up to divine worship, prayer, and sacrifices ; and
 such of them as were near Jerusalem, when the
 time of their course came, assisted at the sacrifices ;
 and such as were afar off, betook themselves to the
 synagogues in their cities, and there fasted, prayed,
 and read. And so another of their authors (m) says,
 “ There were twenty and four courses of the
 “ priests, and so twenty and four courses of the
 “ Levites ; and every week the course of the priests
 “ and Levites goes to Jerusalem ; and the twenty
 “ and four stationary men, half of them go thi-
 “ ther, and half are left in their houses, and
 “ pray over the offerings :” for they had their sta-
 tionary cities, where these men dwelt (n). Jericho
 was one : they say (o), “ Jericho was able to pro-
 “ duce a complete station itself ; but because of
 “ dividing the glory to Jerusalem, it furnished
 “ out but half an one.” Hence you need not
 wonder to hear of a priest and Levite on the road
 to Jericho from Jerusalem, as in *Luke* x. 31, 32.
 for they say, in the same place, that twenty-four
 thousand, a station consisted of at Jerusalem, and
 there was half a station at Jericho : as for the
 heads of the courses of the houses of their fathers,
 “ There were in a course five, six, seven, eight,
 “ nine of them ; a course which had five (heads)
 “ in it, three offered three days, and two offered
 “ four days ; a course in which were six, five of-
 “ fered five days, and one offered two days ; a
 “ course in which were seven, every one offered
 “ on his day ; a course in which were eight, six
 “ offered six days, and two offered one day ; a
 “ course in which were nine, five offered five days,
 “ and four offered two days ; and there were some
 “ that fixed themselves for ever ; and a course that
 “ was (or began) on a sabbath-day, was always
 “ on a sabbath ; and that which was at the going
 “ out of the sabbath, was always at the going out
 “ of the sabbath ; and there were some of them
 “ that offered at every course ; and there were
 “ some that cast lots at every course (p).” But to
 say no more of these courses and stations, I con-
 clude with what Maimonides (q) says of them :
 “ It is not possible that a man’s offering should be
 “ offered up, and he not stand by it ; but the of-

“ ferings of the congregation are the offerings of
 “ all Israel ; and it is not possible that all Israel
 “ should stand in the court at the time of sacrifice :
 “ wherefore the former prophets ordered, that they
 “ should choose out of Israel men that were fit, and
 “ feared to sin, that they may be the messengers
 “ of all Israel to stand by the offerings, and these
 “ are called the men of the station ; and they di-
 “ vided them into twenty and four stations, ac-
 “ cording to the number of the courses of the
 “ priests and Levites ; and at every station one of
 “ them was appointed over them all, and he is
 “ called the head of the station ; and every week
 “ the men of the station of that week gather to-
 “ gether ; and such of them as are in Jerusalem,
 “ or near to it, go into the temple, with the course
 “ of the priests and Levites of that week ; and they
 “ who are in that station that are at a distance,
 “ when their station comes, they gather together to
 “ the synagogue, which is in their place.” Then
 he goes on to give an account, as before, how often
 they fast in that week, how many prayers they say,
 and what they read.

And his wife was of the daughters of Aaron] It
 is a saying of R. Jochanan (r) ; “ He that would
 “ be rich, let him join himself to the seed of
 “ Aaron ; for so it is, that the law and the priest-
 “ hood make rich. — R. Ida bar Abin married a
 “ priestess, and from him proceeded that were made
 “ doctors, R. Shefeth, the son of R. Idi, and
 “ R. Joshua, the son of R. Idi.” This is not so
 much said in commendation of Zacharias, that he
 took a wife of the same tribe, and of the priestly
 line : for it was lawful for the tribe of Levi to take
 a wife of any other, because it did not make any
 alteration in the inheritances of tribes ; and it is a
 rule with the Jews (s), that priests, Levites, and
 Israelites might marry with one another ; as Mary,
 who was of the tribe of Judah, was akin to Eli-
 sabeth : but to point out the original of John, and
 shew of what extraction he was, his father and
 mother being both of the family of Aaron.

And her name was Elisabeth] The same name
 with אלישבע *Elisheba*, the wife of Aaron, *Exod.*
vi. 23. and whom the Septuagint interpreters there
 call, as here, *Elisabeth*, and this being the name
 of Aaron’s wife, it is very probable it might be a
 common name among the daughters of Aaron, in
 succeeding generations.

6 And they were both righteous before
 God, walking in all the commandments and
 ordinances of the Lord blameless.

Not

(l) Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. (m) Piske Toseph. Moed
 Katon, art. 62. (n) Misn. Bicurim, c. 3. §. 2. &
 Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. (o) T. Hieros. Taaniot,
 fol. 67. 4. (p) Ibid. fol. 68. 1.
 (q) Hilchet Cele Hamikdash, c. 6. §. 1, 2.

(r) T. Bab. Pefachim, fol. 49. 2.

(s) Misn. Kiddushin, c. 4. §. 1.

Not as the Pharisees, only righteous before men, but in the sight of God, who sees the heart, and whose judgment is according to truth: and therefore were not justified by the deeds of the law; for by them no man can be justified in the sight of God; but were made righteous through the righteousness of Christ, by which the saints were made righteous before the coming of Christ, as those after it; see *Acts* xv. 11. *Rev.* xiii. 8. God beheld them in his Son, as clothed with that righteousness he engaged to bring in, and as cleansed from all sin in that blood of his which was to be shed; and they appeared to him, and in the eye of his justice, and according to his law, righteous persons; though this character may also regard the internal holiness of their hearts, and the truth and sincerity of grace in them; which God, who trieth the hearts and reins of the children of men, knew, took notice of, and bore testimony to; as likewise their holy, upright walk and conversation before men, and which was observed by God, and acceptable to him, though imperfect, as arising from a principle of grace, being performed in the faith and fear of him, and with a view to his glory, and for the sake, and through the righteousness of his Son.

Walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord] This was not the matter of their righteousness before God, but the evidence of it before men: by *the commandments* are meant, all those that are of a moral nature, which regarded their duty to God and man, and which are comprehended in love to both; and by *the ordinances of the Lord*, are intended the injunctions and institutions of the ceremonial law, which is called *the law of commandments, contained in ordinances*, which though now abolished, were then in force: and it was right and commendable in them to observe them, who by their walking in them, shewed they loved them, both one and the other; esteemed them concerning all things to be right; and had respect to them all, and observed them, and took pleasure in walking in them, which, by the grace of God, they continued to do; for *walking* not only shews that these commands and ordinances were a way marked out for them, but in which they took pleasure, and made progress: and were

Blameless] Not that they were without sin, as none are; and it appears from this chapter that Zacharias was not, see *ψ.* 20. but they were so in the sight of God; as they were justified by the righteousness of Christ, so they were without fault before the throne, and unreprouable before God; and as to their moral and religious character and conduct before men, they did not indulge themselves in any known sin, but lived in all good conscience among men; nor were they remiss and negligent in the discharge of duty; they were not guilty

of any notorious breach of the law of God, or of any remarkable negligence in the business of religious observances: and though they might observe enough in them to charge themselves with, and to humble themselves before God and men; yet so strict were they in their lives and conversations, that those who were the most intimately acquainted with them, had nothing very material to blame them for.

7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.

They had neither son nor daughter; and which was accounted a great infelicity; but this was not owing to the judgment of God upon them for any sins they had been guilty of, as the above character of them shews; and it had been the case of some righteous pairs before them for a great while; as Abraham and Sarah, Manoah and his wife, Elkanah and Hannah:

Because that Elisabeth was barren] So that it was peculiarly her case, and not Zacharias's: and though God had promised the people of Israel that there should be no male nor female barren among them, *Deut.* vii. 14. yet there were instances and exceptions to this general rule, as before mentioned, when it was the pleasure of God to make himself known, and magnify his power in the extraordinary conception and birth of any person; and therefore, though barrenness was reckoned a reproach to a person, there was, in this case, a particular hand of God, to answer a special purpose: the signs of sterility are, according to the Jews (*t*), when a woman had not breasts as other women have; her voice gross, so that it could not be discerned whether it was a man's or a woman's, &c.

And they both were now well stricken in years] Which made the conception and birth of John the more extraordinary, and even miraculous, and so the belief of it the more difficult; see *Gen.* xvii. 17. It may be literally rendered, *they had proceeded*, or had far advanced *in their days*: it is an Hebraism, and answers to באים בימים in *Gen.* xviii. 11. *Josh.* xiii. 1. and chap. xxiii. 1, 2. and *1 Kings* i. 1. where the Septuagint render it by the same phrase as here. The Mahometan writers, *Beidavi* and *Jallallo'din*, say (*u*), "that Zacharias was ninety-nine years of age, and his wife eighty-nine."

8 And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course,

To

(*t*) T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 50. 2. Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Yebamot, c. 1. §. 1. & Maimon, Hilch. Ithor, c. 2. §. 6.

(*u*) In Koran, c. 3.

To which he was called and obtained, even to offer gifts and sacrifices for men; whilst he was in the way of his duty, when oftentimes God appears to, and in favour of his people; whilst he was performing it,

Before God] In the temple, where was the symbol of the divine presence, before the altar of the Lord; and as having the fear of God before his eyes; considering himself as in the sight of God, and doing his work faithfully and sincerely:

In the order of his course] Taking his turn in the order of the course of Abia, to which he belonged; see the note on v. 5.

9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

In which, every man took his part in the execution of it by lot; and which was not an original settled law of God, but a custom, which, in process of time, through the number of the priests, took place, and prevailed. The occasion of it was this; "At first, whoever would, might sweep the altar; or cleanse it—it happened that two alike ran, and came up to the ascent of the altar, and one thrust down the other, and he fell, and his leg was broke; and when the sanhedrim saw that they came into danger, they ordered that they should not cleanse the altar, but by lot (2)." And so likewise all other sorts of service, were settled by lot:

His lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord] Where was the altar of incense, and which was burnt upon it morning and evening; see *Exod. xxx. 1, 7, 8*, and was typical of the continual intercession of Jesus Christ; and this part of service was assigned him by lot. The priests used to cast lots, what part they should take in the service of the temple, in the order of the course to which they belonged (a). "There were four lots there, and this was the first lot (that is, to cleanse the altar.) The second lot was, who should slay (the sacrifice,) who should sprinkle (the blood,) who should remove the ashes from the innermost altar, who should cleanse the candlestick; who should bring the members (or parts of the sacrifice) to the ascent of the altar.—The third lot was, Ye new ones, to the incense come, *וְיָבִיאוּ* and cast lots. And the fourth, Ye new ones, with the old ones, who shall bring up the parts from the ascent of the altar to the altar." And this was not only the case on the day of atonement, to which these rules belong; but every day in the daily service and sacrifice, when the same rules were observed, as appears

from the rubric of the daily sacrifice (b): "The president said unto them (the priests,) Come and cast lots who shall slay, who shall sprinkle, who shall remove the ashes from the innermost altar, who shall remove the ashes from the candlestick, who shall bring up the parts to the ascent of the altar," &c. Again (c), he says to them, O ye new ones, to the incense come, and cast lots; and they cast lots, and he is worthy, whom he accounts worthy—and he that is accounted worthy of the incense, takes a vessel, and the vessel is like to a large golden bushel, that holds three kabs, and a bowl in the middle of it, full and heaped up with incense, with a cover, and a sort of a linen cloth put over it." And it is afterwards said (d), "He that is worthy of the incense, takes the bowl out of the vessel, and gives it to his friend, or he that is near to him; and if it is scattered from it, in the midst of it, he puts it into his fist; and they teach him, saying, Take care that thou dost not begin before thy face, that thou art not burnt: when he begins, he spreads it, and goes out; and he that burns incense, may not do it, until the president says, Burn incense." The account Maimonides gives of this matter (e), is as follows; "All the services that they do every day, they do, *דְּבָרֵי לֵוִי* by lot: There were four lots, they cast every day in the morning; the first lot was, who should cleanse the altar: and the second lot, thirteen were worthy of it, according to the order of their standing: the third lot, the president says to them, *עַתָּה* even to all the men of the house of the father of that day, Whoever has never burnt incense, let him come and cast lots; and they gather together to the president, and cast lots; and he that goes out by the lot first, he is he that is worthy to burn incense: the fourth lot, they all gather together, and cast lots to know who shall bring up the parts from the ascent of the altar, to the altar; they cast lots, and he is worthy, who is accounted worthy: the daily evening sacrifice, they do not cast another lot for it; but every priest that is worthy of any service of the services of the morning, is worthy of the evening, except that of the incense; for they cast another lot for that in the evening; and every one may come, who has never burnt incense of the men of that house of the fathers, and cast lots for it; but if they have all of them burnt incense already, they all of them cast lots, in the morning, at the third lot; and he that is worthy

(b) *Mish. Tamid. c. 3. §. 1.* (c) *Ibid. c. 3. §. 2. 4.*

(d) *Ibid. c. 6. §. 3.* (e) *Hilchet Tamidin, c. 4. §. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Vid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 25. 1. & Gloss. in fol. 22. 1. & Maimon. & Bartenora in Mish. Yoma, c. 2. §. 1.*

(2) *Mish. Yoma, c. 2. §. 1, 2.* (3) *Ibid. §. 2, 3, 4.*

"worthy of it in the morning, burns incense in the evening." Hence it appears, that the burning of incense, as other parts of the priest's service, was by lot; and that they were new priests, or such who had never burnt incense, that cast lots for it: for it is a tradition (e), that no man ever burnt incense twice; the reason assigned for it is, because it makes a man rich; and therefore that every one might partake of the blessing in their turns, new ones were called unto it: whether Zacharias had ever burnt incense before, and whether he now did it in the morning or evening, is not certain.

10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

In the court of the Israelites, whilst Zacharias was in the holy place; though not in the holy of holies, where only the high priest entered: it looks, as Dr Lightfoot conjectures, as if this was on a sabbath-day, since there was such a multitude of people together; for on the week-day, there were only the priests and Levites of the course, and the stationary men, which represented the Israelites, and some of the more devout sort of people; but here, was the whole multitude of the people; or as the Ethiopic version renders it, "all the people were in a full congregation praying:" prayer was wont to be made at the time of incense; hence it is compared to it, *Psal.* cxli. 2. And hence it is, that Christ is said to offer up the prayers of all saints, with his much incense, *Rev.* viii. 3, 4.

In the time of incense] Whether it was morning or evening, the people were obliged to be at a distance, whilst that was burning; the Jewish canons confirm this (f): "In the time they burn the incense in the temple every day, כול העם נפרד מהם, they separate all the people," from the temple, "and from between the porch and the altar; there is not a man there, till he comes out that burns the incense."

11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

Gabriel, as seems manifest from *Y.* 19, 26, 36. the same angel that had appeared to Daniel, about the time of the evening oblation, near five hundred years before, and gave him an account of the time of the Messiah's coming, *Dan.* ix. 21. The Jews sometimes speak of divine and wonderful appearances to their high priests and priests, at such times, and in such places: "It is a tradition, That R. Ishmael ben Elishah, should say, One time I went in, לחקר קשרי, "to burn in-

cense;" and I saw Actariel (one of the names of God with them) the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, who was sitting on a throne, high and lifted up (g)." And so they say of Simeon the just, that there was always an appearance when he went into the holy of holies; it is related thus (h): "Simeon the just, ministered unto Israel in the high priesthood, forty years; and in the last year, he said to them, I shall die this year. They said to him, From whence dost thou know it? He replied to them, Every year that I have entered into the holy of holies, there was, וקן אחד, "one old man," clothed in white, and veiled in white, that went in with me, and came out with me; and this year he went in with me, but did not come out with me." And according to Josephus (i), the high priest Hyrcanus, received an oracle, or answer from God, as he was offering incense; so that the Jews ought not to discredit such an appearance to Zacharias:

Standing on the right side of the altar of incense] Of which, see *Exod.* xxx. 1—10. and chapter xxxv. 25—28. the situation of it, according to the Jews, was this (k): "The table (of shewbread) was in the north, two cubits and a half distant from the wall; and the candlestick was in the south, two cubits and a half distant from the wall; and the altar (of incense) was in the middle, and stood between them." And to this agrees the account of Maimonides (l), who says, "The candlestick was on the south, on the left hand, as you go in; and the table of shewbread on the right hand, and both of them on the side of the holy of holies without; and the altar of incense was between them both, without." So that it was on the north side that the angel stood.

12 And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

Saw the angel;

He was troubled, and fear fell upon him] For such appearances of angels were not now so common as formerly; and when they were more usual, generally had such effects on the minds, even of good men; see *Judges* vi. 22. *Dan.* viii. 17.

13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

He calls him by his name; for holy men are known to angels in person, and by name; to whom they are ministering spirits, and for whose good they

(e) T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 26. 1.

(f) Maimon. Hilch. Tamin, c. 3. §. 3. 9. & Yom Haecippurim, c. 4. §. 2. Vid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 44. 1.

(g) T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 7. 1.

(h) T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 42. 3.

i. 13. c. 18.

(i) T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 33. 2.

(l) Hilch. Beth Habbecchira, c. 1. §. 7.

(j) De Bello Jud.

they are concerned; and bid him not be afraid, as the angel also said to the women at Christ's sepulchre, *Matt. xxviii. 5.* for he saw by his countenance and gestures, that he was greatly surprised and terrified at the sight of him:

For thy prayer is heard] Which he had many years ago put up for a son; for it cannot be thought that he had been now praying for one, being in such an advanced age, and having for years past given up all hopes of one, and was even unbelieving, when he was told by the angel he should have one. Prayer is sometimes immediately heard, and answered; and sometimes an answer is deferred a long time, to try the faith and patience of the saints, and to discover the more the wisdom, power, and goodness of God: or this may have regard to his present prayer, one branch of which, might concern the coming of the Messiah, which was now expecting, and therefore is told, that his prayer was heard; since the angel that appeared to him, brought him the news of the conception and birth of his forerunner:

And thy wife Elisabeth shall bear a son] Who had been always barren, and was called so, *ŷ. 7, 36.*

And thou shalt call his name John] In Hebrew, Jochanan, and signifies *gracious*; a fit name for one that was filled with the gifts and graces of the Spirit; and was the harbinger of the Messiah, who is full of grace and truth; and the usherer in of the Messiah's kingdom, which is a dispensation of grace.

14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.

Not only because of his having a son; but because this his son would be "the prophet of the highest; would go before the Lord, and prepare his ways; give knowledge of salvation to many, and light to them that were in darkness, and guide their feet in the way of peace:" all which, and more, he afterwards expresses in his song, whereby this part of the angel's prediction had its accomplishment:

And many shall rejoice at his birth] As the neighbours and cousins of his parents did; see *ŷ. 58.* and not only they, but all others, who afterwards had knowledge of him as a prophet, and as the forerunner of the Messiah.

15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

Of *Jehovah*, the Father; with whom what is highly esteemed among men, is oftentimes an abomination; and of the Lord Jesus Christ, before

whom he was to go, and who pronounced him a prophet, and more than a prophet, and even greater than any born of women, *Matt. xi. 9, 11.* and of the Lord, the Spirit, with whom he was filled from his mother's womb: he was great, not in birth and blood, in worldly riches and grandeur; but in gifts and grace, in his work, office, and usefulness, and in the esteem of God, and even of men too.

And shall drink neither wine nor strong drink] Which were forbidden the Nazarites, *Numb. vi. 3.* where the Jews, by *wine*, understand new wine; and by *strong drink*, old wine: so all the three Targums, of Onkelos, Jonathan ben Uzziel, and the Jerusalem, paraphrase the words there, "From wine, new and old, he shall separate himself;" and they allow strong drink to a Nazarite, that has no wine in it: their canon (*m*) runs thus; "Three things are forbidden a Nazarite, defilement, and shaving, and whatever proceeds from the vine, whether fruit, or the refuse of fruit; but strong drink made of dates, or dried figs, and such like, is free for a Nazarite; and the strong drink which is forbidden him in the law, is strong drink made of mixture of wine." But the Hebrew word, שכר and which is here retained by the Evangelist, signifies (*n*) any sort of liquor which is inebriating, whether it is made of fruits, or honey, or what not. The Jews had no such strong drink as ours, which we call *beer*, or *ale*; but they speak of the strong drink of the Medes, which they say was an inebriating liquor, made of barley (*o*):

And he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb] Or "whilst in his mother's womb;" as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, render it: like Jeremy, he was sanctified, set apart, and ordained to be the prophet of the Highest, before he came out of his mother's womb; and was then under such an influence of the Spirit of God, as to leap in it for joy, at the salutation of the mother of Christ to his, *ŷ. 41, 44.* and very early appeared to have the extraordinary gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, qualifying him for his work.

16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.

To whom only, or at least chiefly, he was sent, and came preaching, and administering the ordinance of baptism; and great multitudes of them flocked unto him, attended on his ministry, believed in his doctrine, and submitted to his baptism, but not all; for some slighted his preaching and

(m) Maimon. Hilch. Nezirut, c. 5. §. 1.

(n) R. David Kimchi in Sepher Shorashim, rad. שכר.

(o) Min. Pefach, c. 3. §. 1, & Jarchi, Maimon. & Bartenora in ibid.

and rejected his baptism: however, some there were, and many too, that were converted under his ministry, confessed their sins, and were baptized by him; which verified this prediction:

Shall he turn to the Lord their God.] Not *Jehovah*, the Father; for though he was the Lord God of the Jews in general, and of those that were turned by John's ministry in a special manner; yet John cannot be said to go before him, as he is in the next verse; but the Messiah is here meant, who is the Lord *Jehovah*, and is often so called in the Old Testament; particularly in a prophecy afterwards respected, *Isai. xl. 3.* a name peculiar to God alone: and who also is called God, as he is frequently with additional epithets; as "the mighty God, God over all, the great God, the true God, and eternal life; and our, your, and their God, the God of his covenant people, whether Jews or Gentiles;" see *Isa. xxv. 9.* and chap. xxxv. 4. Conversion, which is meant by turning to God, is not man's work, but God's, and is effected by his mighty power, which is only equal to it: but John was to be, and was an instrument of the conversion of many among the Jews, by preaching the doctrine of repentance towards God, and faith in the Messiah, that was just ready to come: he was the means in the hand of God of turning many from sin, of bringing them to a true sense of it, and to an hearty and ingenuous confession and acknowledgment of it; and from trusting to, and depending upon, their birth-privileges, legal duties, and self-righteousness; and from their gross notions of a temporal Messiah; and of leading them to believe in Christ as a spiritual Saviour, as *the Lamb of God that should take away the sin of the world.*

17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

The Lord his God, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose forerunner he was; the messenger of him, that according to the prophecies in *Isa. xl. 3.* *Mal. iii. 1.* was to go before him, and prepare his ways; as he did, by his wonderful conception and birth, which made way for the more easy belief of the conception and birth of the Messiah, by a virgin; and by his preaching the doctrine of repentance, and administering the ordinance of baptism; which were done to awaken the people's expectation of the Messiah, and that he might be made manifest in Israel, and by pointing him out to them in his preaching:

In the spirit and power of Elias.] Or Elijah, the Syriac and Persic versions add, "the prophet:" John the Baptist, and Elijah, were men much of the same spirit and disposition, and of like power, life, and zeal in religion; and therefore the one goes by the name of the other: they both much conversed in the wilderness; agreed in the austerity of their lives; their habit and dress were much alike; they were both restorers of religion, when very low, and much decayed; were famous for their faithfulness in reproofing the vices of kings, and for their warm zeal for true religion, and for the persecution they endured for the sake of it:

To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children.] In *Mal. iv. 6.* which is the prophecy referred to, it is added, *and the heart of the children to their fathers;* which some understand, of his turning the degenerate offspring of the Jews to the sentiments of their forefathers, and causing them to agree with them in their notions of the Messiah: others, of the turning of the Jews to Christ and his apostles; and others, of his being a means, through his ministry and baptism, of reconciling Jews and Gentiles together, which is the great business of the Gospel-dispensation, ushered in by John; and who preached that all men should believe in Christ, and baptized publicans and Roman soldiers, as well as Jews: and which sense pretty much agrees with the interpretation the Jews put upon the prophecy, as referring to Elijah the Tishbite, whom they expect in person, before the coming of the Messiah: say they (p), "Elijah comes to defile and to cleanse; that is, to pronounce what things are clean or unclean: and to remove afar off, and to bring near; (that is, to determine what families are legitimate or illegitimate.) R. Simeon says, "to compose differences;" and the wise men say, "Neither to remove, nor to bring near, but, שלום לעשרו, "to make peace in the world;" as it is said, *Behold, I send unto you Elijah the prophet, &c. and he shall turn the heart of the fathers, &c.*" But the true meaning is, that John the Baptist, who is meant by Elias, should be an instrument of turning fathers with their children, and children with their fathers, to the Lord; that he should be a means of converting both fathers and children, one as well as another; and to gather persons of every age, and station; for the particle *וְ* which we render *to*, is the same as *עִם* *with*, as Kimchi on the text observes:

And the disobedient to the wisdom of the just.] By the *disobedient* are meant, either Jews or Gentiles; some understand it of the Gentiles, who were children of disobedience, before the light of the Gospel came

came among them: but rather the former are meant, who were a disobedient, rebellious, and gainsaying people; who were gone off from the wisdom, knowledge, and religion, of the just or righteous ones, their forefathers, who prophesied of Christ, rejoiced to see his day, longed for him, and believed in him: now John was to be an instrument of turning some of the unbelieving Jews to the true knowledge of salvation by Christ; which their righteous progenitors waited for, had a right knowledge of, and an interest in: and of leading them either into the Gospel of Christ, that wisdom of God in a mystery; the manifold wisdom of God, in which he has abounded in all wisdom and prudence; and which the righteous men among the Jews searched diligently into, attained some knowledge of, and which even the holy angels desire to look into; so the patriarchs were called just, or righteous; as righteous Abel, just Noah, &c. and so the Jewish fathers. Hence in the Targum on Jer. xii. 5. and xxxi. 16, 21. mention is made of of thy fathers, מִיְּיָקִי "the just," who were of old: or to Christ himself, who is the wisdom of God, and in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, to know him, and believe in him; who in the same Targum on Jer. xxiii. 5. is called מִשִּׁיחַ דְּרִיקָיָה "the Messiah of the just."

To make ready a people prepared for the Lord] The Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, "a perfect people;" and the Persic version, "all the people;" not all the people of the Jews, but God's elect among them; who from all eternity were prepared, as a people in a covenant-relation, as the portion of Christ, and as his spouse and bride, and as such, given to him; they were in electing grace, vessels of mercy, afore prepared for glory; and heaven, as a kingdom, was prepared for them from the foundation of the world: they were provided with all spiritual blessings, which were prepared for them, and bestowed on them in heavenly places, in Christ, before the foundation of the world; even all their grace, and all their glory; yea, even their good works are such, which God has fore-ordained or fore-prepared, that they should walk in. Now, the work of John the Baptist was to make ready this people, by pointing out to them in a ministerial way wherein their readiness lay, to meet the Lord, and be for ever with him in heaven; not in a civil, moral, or legal righteousness, nor in outward humiliation for, and abstinence from sin; nor in a submission to Gospel-ordinances, and in a mere profession of religion, and in an observance of a round of duties; but in justification by the righteousness of Christ, and in regeneration and sanctification by his Spirit and grace; the one giving a right to, the other a meetness for the heavenly inheritance: and John, and so any other Gos-

pel minister, may be said to *make ready* a people, in this sense; when they are the instruments of the regeneration and conversion of sinners, and of leading them to the righteousness of Christ, for their justification before God, and acceptance with him.

18 ¶ And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

Notwithstanding such an appearance of an angel to him, which in those times was not so usual, and this in the holy place; and the things themselves which were told him, and these as the return of prayer; yet he distrusted, and wanted a sign, whereby he might know the truth of them; as the Jews were generally desirous of, and as the father of them was; who expressed himself in much such language, on a certain occasion, as this his son did; see Gen. xv. 8.

For I am an old man] At least sixty years of age; for with the Jews, sixty years were reckoned לקַנָּה "for old age (q);" and a man of these years, was accounted an old man: and the Jewish Rabbins observe (r), that the word for old age in Job xxx. 2. is by gematry, sixty; that is, the letters of the word numerically make so much. The Mahometan writers, as before observed on y. 7. make him to be ninety nine years of age: he was not discharged from service; the Levites were at fifty, but not the priests; blemishes, as the Jewish writers say (s), made them unfit for service, but years did not: and even the law concerning the Levites, they say (t), only respected the time they carried the sanctuary from place to place, and not future generations; and that they are disqualified neither by blemishes, nor by years, only by voice, for singing of the song; but then they might be among the porters; so that they were not on that account laid aside from all service:

And my wife well stricken in years] The Mahometan writers, as before, say, she was eighty-nine. A like objection Abraham made, though he afterwards got over it, and was strong in faith, giving glory to God, believing in his power and faithfulness; see Gen. xvi. 17.

19 And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.

The name of an angel well known to Zacharias from

(q) Mifn. Abot, c. 5. §. 21. & Maimon, in ibid.

(r) R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 24. 2.

(s) T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 24. 1.

(t) Maimon, Hilch. Cele Hamikdash, c. 3. §. 8.

from Daniel's prophecies, *Dan.* viii. 16. and chap. ix. 21. and is the first time we read of the name of an angel: the Jews say (*u*), the names of angels came out of Babylon, by the means of the Israelites; and it was there that Daniel became acquainted with this name of Gabriel, and also of Michael. Frequent mention is made of Gabriel in the Jewish writings (*x*): were there a particular angel appointed over conception, as the Jews say (*y*) there is, one would be ready to think it should be Gabriel, since he was sent to declare the conception and birth both of John the Baptist, and of our Lord Jesus Christ: the name of that angel the Jews indeed say (*z*) is Lilah; but yet the Cabbalistic doctors (*a*) affirm, that that angel is under Gabriel. In what language this angel spoke to Zacharias, and afterwards to Mary, may be a needless inquiry; but since the Syriac language was generally spoken, and understood by the Jews at this time, it is highly probable that he spoke to them in that. The Jews have a notion, that none of the ministering angels understand the Syriac language, excepting Gabriel; and he, they say, understood seventy languages (*b*). Now the angel, by making mention of his name, puts Zacharias in mind of the prophecy of Daniel concerning the coming of the Messiah, which, he had from him; and whereas his name signified, "a man of God," or "the power," or "strength of God," or "God is my strength," he suggests unto him, that he ought not to have distrusted his words, since *with God all things are possible*; he adds,

That stand in the presence of God] Beholding his face, hearkening to his voice, and ministering to him, and so had this affair immediately from him; and therefore he had no reason to doubt of the accomplishment of it. Gabriel, according to the Jews, is one of the four angels that surround the throne of God: their names are *Michael, Uriel, Raphael, and Gabriel* (*c*). "*Michael* they place at his right hand, and *Uriel* at his left hand, and "*Gabriel*, מלפני "before him," (in his presence, "as he here says of himself):"

And am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew unto thee these glad tidings] Wherefore, on account of his name, his office, and his mission, especially the subject of it being welcome news, good tidings, what he said ought to have obtained credit with him. Gabriel was one of the ministering spirits sent to minister to them that were heirs of salvation;

his messages were messages of mercy, grace and love; he was not a minister of the wrath and vengeance of God, but of his favour. Agreeable to this the Jews say of him, that his name Gabriel is, by *gematry*, or numerically, the same with *רחמי* "merciful (*d*)."

20 And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

Or "silent, and not able to speak," if he would. Silence is sometimes voluntary; but this was what he could not help:

Until the day that these things shall be performed] Which he had said concerning the conception and birth of a son, and the imposition of a name on him; for this dumbness remained upon Zacharias, not only until his wife had conceived, and the child was born, but until the eighth day after, when he was circumcised, and his name was given him the angel directed to:

Because thou believest not my words] He was struck both deaf and dumb, as appears from his friends making signs to him, *ψ. 62.* which they had no need to have done, could he have heard: he was struck with deafness, because he hearkened not to the angel's words; and with dumbness, because from the unbelief of his heart he objected to them. We learn from hence, what an evil unbelief is, and how much resented by God, and how much it becomes us to take heed that it prevails not in us; and especially since it easily besets us:

Which shall be fulfilled in their season] First the conception, then the birth; after that the calling him by his name, and in process of time, the doing of his work and office; so that the unbelief of Zacharias did not make the faith of God of none effect; for though sometimes the people of God are very unbelieving, yet he abides faithful to his word and promises. Mahomet, in his Alkoran (*e*), very wrongly makes the angel to say these words to Zacharias; "Thy sign shall be that thou shalt speak unto no man for *three days*, otherwise "than by gesture." And elsewhere (*f*) it is said, *three nights*.

21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.

That were without, in the court of the Israelites, praying there, while he was offering incense: these were

(u) T. Hieros. Rosh Hashana, fol. 56. 4.

(x) Targum Jon. in Exod. xxiv. 10. Targum in Ezech. iv. 12. & in Psal. cxxvii. 8. T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 19. 2. Shemot. Rabba, fol. 91. 2. Siphre Torah in Zohar in Gen. fol. 65. 3. & 66. 2.

(y) Targum in Job iii. 3.

(z) T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 16. 2.

(a) Lex Cabbal. p. 230.

(b) T. Bab. Sota, fol. 33. 1.

& Tosephot in Sabbath, fol. 12. 2.

(c) Bemidbar Rabba, 6. 2. fol. 179. 1.

(d) Lex. Cabbal. p. 230.

(e) C. 3. p. 40. Ed. Sale.

(f) C. 10. p. 249.

were waiting for his coming out, in order to be blessed by him, according to *Numb. vi. 23—26.* and be dismissed :

And marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple] Beyond the usual time of burning incense ; which might be occasioned either by a longer discourse of the angel with him than what is here related ; or being struck with amazement at the sight and hearing of the angel, he might continue long musing on this unexpected appearance and relation ; or he might spend some time not only in meditation upon it, but in mental prayer, confession, and thanksgiving. “ The high priest, when he “ went in to burn incense on the day of atonement, “ made a short prayer in the outward house, (in “ the temple) and he did not continue long in his “ prayer, *שלו לחבטו* “ that he might not af- “ fright the Israelites (g),” thinking that he was dead ; for many high priests that were unfit for, or made alteration in the service, died in the holy of holies (h). “ It is reported (i) of one high priest, “ that he continued long in his prayer, and his “ brethren the priests thought to have gone in after “ him ; and they began to go in, and he came “ out : they say unto him, Why didst thou con- “ tinue long in thy prayer ? He replied to them, “ Is it hard in your eyes that I should pray for you, “ and for the house of the sanctuary, that it might “ not be destroyed ? They answered him, Be not “ used to do so ; for we have learned, that a man “ should not continue long in prayer, that he “ may not affright Israel.” This high priest, they elsewhere say (k), was Simeon the just.

22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them : and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple : for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.

Or deliver the benediction they were waiting for :

And they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple] Which he made them to understand by the gestures he used :

For he beckoned unto them] By nodding his head, or by some motions of his hands, the Ethiopic version adds, “ with his hand ;” or of his lips ; for the signs of a dumb man are distinguished into *רמיו* and *קמיו* (l) ; the one is a sign that is expressed by the head and hands ; and the other is a sign expressed by the lips : hence that rule (m), “ A dumb man beckons, and is beckoned to ; and “ Ben Bethira says, He moves his lips, and lips “ are moved to him :”

And remained speechless] To the time the angel fixed.

23 And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

In the order of the course, which might be three, four, five, or six days, according to the number of the heads of the house of their fathers in the course ; see the note on verse 5.

Were accomplished] For though he was deaf and dumb, he was not hereby disqualified for service. Deafness and dumbness excused persons from various duties (n), but did not disqualify priests : a Levite, if he had lost his voice, was disqualified, but not a priest (o) ; the reason was this, because it was one part of the work of the Levites to sing, and therefore could not perform it without a voice ; but such was the work of the priests, that though deaf and dumb, they could discharge it ; as cleansing the altar, trimming the lamps, carrying the parts to the altar, laying them upon it, and burning them, or offering any sacrifice, burning incense, &c. which was the business of Zacharias ; which when he had fulfilled,

He departed to his own house] Which was not at Jerusalem, but in the hill-country, in a city of Judah there ; see verse 39, 40.

24 ¶ And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying,

After the days of his ministration in the temple, quickly after his return home : the Ethiopic version reads, “ after two days,”

His wife Elisabeth conceived] According to the angel’s prediction, and notwithstanding her barrenness, and the unbelief of her husband ;

And hid herself five months] The Arabic and Persic versions render it, “ hid her bigness ;” but there could be no occasion to take any methods to hide this, since, if she said nothing of it herself, and there could be no suspicion of it in one of her years, it could not be much discerned in her by such a time ; but she hid herself, or lived retired, that she might be fully satisfied that she was with child, before she said any thing about it ; and that she might not discover any pride or vanity on account of it ; and to avoid all discourse with others about it, which might be rumoured abroad ; and chiefly to shun all ceremonial uncleanness, which one, who bred a Nazarite, was obliged to ; see *Judges xiii. 14.* and most of all, that she might be

(g) *Misna Yoma*, c. 5. §. 1. in *ibid.*

(h) *Maimon. & Bartenora* in *ibid.* (i) *T. Bab. Yoma*, fol. 53. 2.

(k) *T. Hierosol. Yoma*, fol. 42. 2.

(l) *Misna*, *ibid.*

(m) *Misna*, *ibid.*

(n) *Bartenora* in *Misna*, *Gittin*, c. 1. §. 7.

(o) *Misna*, *Trumot*, c. 1. §. 1, 2. *Chagiga*, c. 1. §. 1.

(p) *Maimon. & Bartenora* in *Misna*, *Cholin*, c. 1. §. 6.

be retired, and spend her time in meditation upon the goodness of God, and in returning thanks to him for the favour she had received; *saying*, as in the following verse,

25 Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on *me*, to take away my reproach among men.

In a very gracious and bountiful manner; in giving her strength to conceive a son in her old age, and such an one that was to be *great*, and so useful in his day; of which her husband had doubtless informed her by writing, though he could not speak:

In the days wherein he looked on me] With a favourable eye, with a look of love and mercy:

To take away my reproach among men] As barrenness was accounted, especially among the Israelites, the seed of Abraham; to whom was promised a numerous issue, *as the stars in the sky, and as the sand on the sea shore*, and particularly the Messiah; see Gen. xxx. 23. *Isaiah* iv. 1.

26 ¶ And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

After Elisabeth's conception; for so long was John the Baptist conceived before Christ, and so long he was born before him; and it seems as if there was the same distance between the public ministry of the one, and the other. John was before Christ, as man, being his forerunner; but Christ was preferred unto him as mediator, and existed before him, as the eternal Son of God:

The angel Gabriel was sent from God] The same angel, that near five hundred years before gave Daniel an exact account of the time of the Messiah's coming, and six months ago acquainted Zacharias with the conception, birth, character, and office of his forerunner:

Unto a city of Galilee named Nazareth] The whole country of Galilee was mean and contemptible with the Jews: they observe, though through mistake, that no prophet arose out of it, *John* vii. 52. and Nazareth particularly was exceeding despicable in their eyes: hence those words of Nathaniel, *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?* *John* i. 46. see the note on *Matt.* i. 23. and yet hither an angel was sent by God; and here dwelt the mother of our Lord.

27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

A pure virgin, that never knew man; see *1*. 34. and yet

Espoused to a man whose name was Joseph] But they were not come together, nor had he taken her for his wife, and home to his house, nor had they cohabited:

Of the house of David] Which, according to the grammatical construction of the words, may be connected either with the virgin, or with Joseph, to whom she was espoused; and is true of both; for they both were of the house and lineage of David: and this shews what a low condition David's family was in, that the persons that were the nearest allied to it were a carpenter, and a poor virgin; and both residing in so despicable a place as Nazareth in Galilee:

And the virgin's name was Mary] A name frequent among the Jews, and the same with *Miriam*; of which name was the sister of Moses and Aaron.

28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, *thou that art* highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed *art* thou among women.

Into her house, and into the room where she was:

And said, Hail] All health, happiness, and prosperity attend thee; see *Matt.* xxviii. 19.

Thou art highly favoured] Or graciously accepted, or hast obtained grace; not referring to electing, redeeming, justifying, pardoning, adopting, and sanctifying grace, which she had in common with other saints: but to that special and particular favour, in being chose and singled out from all other women, to be the mother of the Messiah:

The Lord is with thee] So the angel to Gideon, *Judges* vi. 12. or *be with thee*, an usual form of salutation among the Jews; see *Ruth* ii. 4.

Thou art blessed among women] And wilt be pronounced so by other women, as she was by Elisabeth, *1*. 42. and by another woman, *Luke* xi. 27.

29 And when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

The Perfic version renders it, "when Mary saw the angel;" which expresses the true sense of the words. The Vulgate Latin reads, "when she heard," that is, the salutation:

She was troubled at his saying] At his speaking to her; she was surprised at the sight of him, and more at what he said to her;

And cast in her mind] Or thought, and reasoned within herself,

What manner of salutation this should be] For it was not usual with the Jews for a man to use any salutation to a woman; with them it was not lawful

ful to be done at all in any shape or form; not by a messenger, nor even by her own husband (p); so that Mary might well be thrown into a concern what should be the meaning of this; and especially, that she should be addressed in such language, and saluted as a peculiar favourite of God, and blessed among women.

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

The angel observing the consternation and confusion she was in; said,

Fear not, Mary] He calls her by her name, signifying that she was well known to him, as the saints are to the ministering angels, who are often sent unto them, encamp about them, and do them many good offices; and bids her not be afraid, he had no ill design upon her, nor brought any ill news to her:

For thou hast found favour with God] Or, grace; and what that particular grace and favour was, is expressed in the following verses.

31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

Though a pure virgin, which never knew a man; and therefore, a *behold*, is prefixed to it, as being what was extraordinary and wonderful; as it is also, in the prophecy of it, in *Isaiah* vii. 14. to which the angel manifestly refers, and is, by Matthew, cited, as accomplished hereby; see the note on *Matt.* i. 22, 23.

And bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus] Which signifies a *saviour*; and a Saviour Christ is of God's appointing, providing and sending; and a very suitable one, being a spiritual saviour, and a complete one, both able and willing to *save to the uttermost all that believe in him*; nor is there any other, nor *salvation in any other*: he is the saviour of his people, whom the Father has given him; even of all the elect, whether of Jews or Gentiles; and of them from all their sins, and from all their enemies; and whom he saves with a spiritual and eternal salvation.

32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.

Great in his person, as God-man; this child born, and son given, being the Angel of the great counsel, the *Mighty God, and Everlasting Father*; see *Isaiah* ix. 6. which is here referred to: and in

his offices; in his prophetic office, being that great and famous prophet Moses spoke of, *mighty in word and deed*: in his doctrine and miracles; in his priestly office, being a great high priest, both in the oblation of himself, and in his prevalent intercession; and in his kingly office, being the *King of kings, and Lord of lords*; and in the whole of his office, as mediator, being a great Saviour, the author of a great salvation for great sinners; in which is greatly displayed the glory of all the divine perfections: great also in his works, the miracles that he wrought, as proofs of his Deity and Messiahship, the work of redemption, the resurrection of himself from the dead, and of all men at the last day; and in the glory he is now possessed of in the human nature, at the Father's right hand, where he is *highly exalted above all principality and power*:

And shall be called the Son of the Highest] That is, of God, one of whose names is, *the Most High*; see *Gen.* xiv. 18—20. not by creation, as angels and men, nor by adoption, as saints, nor by office, as magistrates, are called *the children of the Most High*, *Psalms* lxxxii. 6. but by nature, being the eternal Son of God; of the same nature with him, and equal to him: for he was not now to begin to be the Son of God, he was so before, even from all eternity; but the sense is, that he should now be known, owned, and acknowledged to be the Son of God; being as such manifested in human nature, and should be proved to be so by the works he wrought, and declared to be the Son of God with power by his resurrection from the dead:

And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David] Christ, as God, is the Son of God, as man, the son of David; a name often given to the Messiah, and by which he was well known among the Jews: and as Christ descended from him, as man, in a literal sense, he had a right to the throne of his father David; and the Jews themselves say, that he was, קרוב למלכות "nearly allied to the kingdom (q)": but here it intends not his throne, in a literal, but in a figurative sense; for as David was a type of the Messiah in his kingly office, hence the Messiah is called *David their king*, *Hosea* iii. 5. so his throne was typical of the Messiah's throne and kingdom; which is not of this world, but is in his church, and is set up in the hearts of his people, where he reigns by his Spirit and grace; and this is a throne and kingdom given by the Lord God. The kingdom of nature and providence he has by right of nature, as the Son of the Highest; the kingdom of grace, or the mediatorial kingdom, the kingdom of priests,

(p) T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 70. 1, 2. Maimon, Hilchot Issure Biah, c. 21.

(q) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 43. 1.

or royal priesthood, is a delegated one; his Father has set him as king over his holy hill of Zion; and he is accountable for his government to him, and will one day deliver it up complete and perfect.

33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Shall reign, not over the Jews, the posterity of Jacob, in a literal sense; but over the whole Israel of God, consisting of Jews and Gentiles. For as his father David reigned over the Idumeans, Syrians, and others, as well as over the house of Judah and Israel, so this his son shall reign over both Jews and Gentiles; his kingdom shall be from one end of the earth to the other, even over all the elect of God; who in successive generations call themselves by the name of Jacob, and surname themselves by the name of Israel, of whatsoever nation they be; and this reign of his shall be

For ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end] Referring to *Isaiah* ix. 7. see also *Dan.* ii. 44. and vii. 14. he shall reign in the hearts of his people: here unto the end of the world; and with his saints a thousand years in the new heavens and new earth; and with them to all eternity, in the ultimate glory.

34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

This she said, not as doubting the truth of what was said; for she required no sign, as Zacharias did; nor is she charged with, and blamed for unbelief, as he was; yea, it is expressly said, *ψ. 45.* that she believed: nor was this a curious question, as whether she should have this son by a man in a married state, or in her present virgin-state; for she clearly understood the angel to mean the latter; and therefore her words express her admiration at it, and also her desire to be informed of the manner how it should be: as to the matter of fact, she did not dispute it, but wanted to be resolved by what means it would be brought about: she knew by prophecy, that the Messiah was to be born of a virgin, and she perceived, by the angel's declaration, that she was that virgin, but could not imagine in what way this amazing thing should be effected; and therefore proposes this question for the following reason,

Seeing I know not a man?] A husband, as the Arabic version renders it; not Joseph, nor any other man; for though she was espoused to Joseph, yet he had not taken her to wife; nor were they, as yet, come together; and before they did, she was found with child of the holy Ghost, *Matt.* i. 18. she

was a pure virgin, untouched by man. The words are an Euphemism, or a modest way of expressing carnal copulation; see *Gen.* iv. 1.

35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

The angel gave her an account of the manner in which what he had said should be effected, as well as observed some things for the strengthening of her faith.

The holy Ghost shall come upon thee] The words, upon thee, are left out in the Syriac and Persian versions; but are retained in others, and in all copies: the formation of Christ's human nature, though common to all the three persons, yet is particularly and most properly ascribed to the Spirit; not to the first person, the Father, lest it should be thought that he is only the Father of him, as man; nor to the second person, the Son, since it is to him that the human nature is personally united; but to the third person, the Spirit, who is the sanctifier; and who separated, and sanctified it, the first moment of its conception, and preserved it from the taint of original sin. His coming upon the virgin must be understood in consistence with his omnipresence, and immensity; and cannot design any local motion, but an effectual operation in forming the human nature of her flesh and substance; and not in the ordinary manner in which he is concerned in the formation of all men, *Job* xxxiii. 4. but in an extraordinary way, not to be conceived of, and explained. The phrase most plainly answers to, *ל על* in frequent use with the Jews (*r*), as expressive of coition.

And the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee] By the power of the Highest is not meant the Lord Jesus Christ, who is sometimes called the power of God; but rather the holy Ghost, as before, who is styled the finger of God, and power from on high, *Luke* xi. 20. and chap. xxiv. 49. unless it should be thought that the perfection of divine power, common to all the three persons, is intended; and so points out the means by which the wondrous thing should be performed, even by the power of God; and which should not only be employed in forming the human nature of Christ, but in protecting the virgin from any suspicion and charge of sin, and defending her innocence and virtue, by moving upon Joseph to take her to wife. In the word, overshadow, some think there is an allusion to the Spirit of God moving upon the face of the waters, in *Gen.* i. 2. when,

(r) *Mish.* Sanhedrim, c. 7. §. 4. & passim alibi.

when, *והוא יושב עליהם* he brooded upon them, as the word may be rendered; and which is the sense of it; according to the Jewish writers (1); as a hen, or any other bird, broods on its eggs to exclude its young: and others have thought the allusion may be to *הזמין* (2) "the nuptial covering," which was a veil, or canopy, like a tent, supported on four staves, under which the bridegroom and bride were betrothed; or, as Dr Lightfoot thinks, it is a modest phrase alluding to the conjugal embraces, signified by a man's spreading the skirt of his garment over the woman, which Ruth desired of Boaz, *Ruth* iii. 9. though the Jewish writers say (3), that phrase is, *לשון נישואין* expressive of the act of marriage, or taking to wife. The phrase of being *מגולל* "over-shadowed," or "covered with the spirit of prophecy," as the virgin also was, is used by the Targumist on *1 Chron.* ii. 55.

Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God] The human nature of Christ is here called a *thing*; for it was not a person; it never subsisted of itself, but was taken at once into union with the person of the Son of God, otherwise there would be two persons in Christ, whereas he is God and man in one person; and it is said to be *holy*, being free from that original pollution and sin, in which all that descend from Adam by ordinary generation are conceived and brought forth; and is, moreover, said to be born of a virgin, *of thee, or out of thee*. Christ's flesh was formed out of the virgin's; he took flesh of her; his body did not descend from heaven, or pass through her, as water through a pipe, as some heretics of old said: nor did his human nature, either as to soul or body, pre-exist his incarnation; but *in the fulness of time he was made of a woman*, and took a true body of her, and a reasonable soul, into union with his divine person; and

Therefore should be called the Son of God] Not that he was now to become the Son of God; he was so before his incarnation, and even from all eternity; but he was now to be manifested as such in human nature: nor does the angel predict, that he should, for this reason, be called the Son of God, for he never was, on this account, so called, either by himself, or others: nor is the particle, *therefore*, causal, but consequential: the angel is not giving a reason why Christ should be the Son of God, but why he should be owned, and acknowledged as such by his people; who would infer, and conclude from his wonderful conception and birth,

(1) R. Sol. Jarchi, R. Aben Ezra, & R. Levi ben Gerson in *Gen.* 1. 2.

(2) T. Bab. Sota, fol. 49. 2. Vid. David de Pomis Lex. Heb. p. 67. 2.

(3) Targum, Jarchi, & Aben Ezra in loc.

that he is the *Emmanuel*, God with us; the *Child* that was to be born, and the *Son* given; whose name should be *Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, &c.* *Isai.* vii. 14. and ix. 6. Moreover, the word *also*, is not to be overlooked; and the sense is, that seeing that human nature, which should be born of the virgin, would be united to the Son of God, it likewise should bear the same name, being in personal union with him, who was so from all eternity.

36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.

For though Elisabeth was of the daughters of Aaron, or of the tribe of Levi by her father's side, yet she might be of the tribe of Judah by her mother's side, and so akin to Mary. The Persic version calls her "aunt by the mother's side:" intermarriages between the two tribes of Levi and Judah were frequent; nor were they at all contrary to the intention of that law that forbid the tribes to intermarry, which was to preserve the inheritance in each tribe, since the tribe of Levi had none at all. Though she might be called her cousin in a more general sense; it being usual with the Jews to call all of their own nation their kinsmen and kinswomen, according to the flesh: but the former sense seems more agreeable; and so Mary is directed to her own family, and to her own relations, and known friends, for a sign, by which her faith might be confirmed, in what the angel had said unto her; for if she found the one to be true, she might conclude the other was also; which is as follows:

She hath also conceived a son in her old age] Though Mary asked no sign, yet one is given her, whereby she might know the truth of what was spoken: for if it should appear that Elisabeth had received strength to conceive, as was declared by the angel, and that a son too, which he could not have known without a divine revelation; and that in her old age, which was extraordinary and supernatural, she might assure herself, that the message brought to her was from God; and that she likewise, though a virgin, might conceive, and bear a son: the angel adds, as a further testimony of the truth of things;

And this is the sixth month with her who was called barren] Elisabeth was generally known to be barren, and was, by way of reproach, usually called so, but was now six months gone with child; so that it was a plain case, and out of question; the signs of her pregnancy were very apparent.

37 For with God nothing shall be impossible.

That is consistent with his nature and perfections, with his counsels, purposes, and promises: every thing that he has said, purposed, or promised, he is able to do, and will; every word that he has spoken, every thing predicted by his prophets, or declared by his angels, and particularly this of a virgin's conceiving and bearing a son: so that the angel not only answers her question, how this should be, but confirms her faith in it; partly by the instance of her cousin Elisabeth, and partly by observing the infinite omnipotence of God.

38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

In which words she expresses her obedience of faith; she owns herself to be the handmaid of the Lord, and desires to obey him, and be submissive to him as such; and tacitly acknowledges her meanness, and great unworthiness:

Be it unto me, according to thy word] She assented to what the angel said should be unto her; she earnestly desired it might be, and firmly believed it would be; she set her Amen to the angel's message:

And the angel departed from her] To the heavenly regions, from whence he came; to his great Lord and Master that sent him; having dispatched the business he came about, and which he was accountable to him for.

39 ¶ And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill-country with haste, into a city of Juda;

The Ethiopic version renders it, *in that day*; directly, immediately, as soon as the angel was gone from her; partly to know the truth of things, and to make use of the sign which had been given her, for the further confirmation of her faith, which was very right and proper for her to do; and partly to converse with Elisabeth about the great things which God had done for each of them, and to praise his name together:

And went into the hill-country with haste] The same which is called the country of the hills, and the hills, and the mountains, in *Josbua* x. 40. and chap. xi. 2, 16. and xvi. 1. and xviii. 13. and 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 10. where the Septuagint use the same word as here. The land of Judea was divided into three parts, הורר "the mountain," or hill country, the campaign country, and the valley (x): from Bethoron to Emmaus is הורר "the hill-country;" from Emmaus to Lud, or Lydda, is the campaign country; and from Lydda to the sea, the valley (y). This place is frequently called,

in the Jewish writings (z), "the king's mountain," "or the royal mountain;" and is said to be very full of cities: ten thousand cities, they say (a), were in the king's mountain, and a thousand of them belonged to R. Eleazer ben Harsum: yea, they say (b), that king Jannai had sixty myriads of cities in the mountain of the king. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it, "went to the mountain," to this mountain, and which is called the mountain, or, as we read it, *the hill-country of Judah*, *Josbua* xxi. 11. on which Hebron was situated; and seems to be the city next mentioned:

Into a city of Juda] For that was given to the children of Aaron, and so may reasonably be thought to be the city where Zacharias dwelt, and not Jerusalem, which was in the tribe of Benjamin. Hebron was a city peculiar to the priests; whereas Jerusalem was not; and it was in the hill-country of Judea; it was remarkable for the goodness of its stones. It is said (c), "You have no stones in all the land of Israel harder than at Hebron; hence they buried the dead there."

40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.

Which was in the above city, and might be well known to her:

And saluted Elisabeth] Not Zacharias; either because he was not at home; or because he was deaf and dumb, and could neither hear her salutation, nor return it; or because it was not usual for women to salute men, nor men to salute women; see the note on *y.* 29. yet one woman might salute another; and especially Mary saluted Elisabeth, because she came to pay the visit to her, and it was with her she was principally concerned.

41 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:

Which might be before she saw her, and at some little distance from her:

The babe leaped in her womb] Which motion was not natural, but supernatural; being made at hearing the voice of Mary, who had now conceived the Messiah, whose forerunner this babe, John the Baptist, was to be; and who, by this motion, gave the first notice of his conception, which his mother Elisabeth took from hence; as he afterwards pointed him out by his finger, and by his baptism made him manifest to Israel:

And

(x) *Misn. Sheviith*, c. 9. §. 2. *Maimon. & Bartenora* in *ibid.*
(y) *T. Hieros. Sheviith*, fol. 38. 4.

(z) *Targum in Jud. iv. 5.* *T. Hieros. Avoda Zara*, fol. 44. 4.
(a) *T. Hieros. Taanith*, fol. 69. 1. (b) *T. Bab. Gittin*, fol. 57. 1. (c) *T. Bab. Sota*, fol. 34. 2. & *Catabot*, fol. 112. 2.

And Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost] Not with the ordinary graces of the Spirit; for these she had been filled with before, but with extraordinary gifts, with a spirit of prophecy; by which she knew that the Messiah was conceived, and that Mary was the mother of her Lord; that many things had been told her; that she had believed them; and there would be a performance of them; and perhaps it was at this time that John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost also; see *ψ. 15.*

42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

So as that all in the house might hear; she spake with great vehemency of soul, and strength of affection, being under a very powerful impression of the Spirit of God:

And said, Blessed art thou among women] The same words that the angel had said to her before, *ψ. 28.*

And blessed is the fruit of thy womb] This is a reason why she is called *blessed*, because her child was blessed; being in union with a divine person, who is God over all blessed for ever; and who has all spiritual blessings in him; and is that seed, in which all nations of the earth were to be blessed; and so is both blessed in himself, and the source of all blessedness to others. The Jews say (*d*), that the six measures of barley Boaz gave to Ruth, chap. iii. 15. signified, that six righteous men should spring from her, and among them the Messiah; who should be *blessed* with six blessings, and they are these; the spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and of might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord; see *Isaiah xi. 2.*

43 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

How comes it to pass, that such notice is taken of me, such an honour is done me; that besides being favoured with a child, who shall be great,

That the mother of my Lord should come to me?] Elisabeth was so far from envying the superior honour conferred on her kinswoman, who was both meaner and younger than she; that she esteems it a wonderful favour that she should be indulged with a visit from her, who had already conceived the Messiah; and in due time would be the mother of him, as man; who in his divine nature, is Lord of all angels, and men, and every creature; and in an especial manner was her Lord, and the Lord of all the saints; by his Father's gift from eternity, by his own purchase in time, and by the power of his grace on each of their souls. Thus the virgin is said to be the mother of our Lord,

(d) Targum & R. Sol. Jarchi in loc.

and so may be called the mother of God; because she was parent of that child, which was in union with him, who is truly Lord and God: just in such sense as the Lord of life and glory is said to be crucified, and God is said to purchase the church with his own blood, *1 Cor. ii. 8. Acts xx. 28.*

44 For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salvation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

This she mentions, as the signal by which she knew that she was the mother of her Lord; namely, from that unusual and extraordinary motion of the child, she felt within her:

The babe leaped in my womb for joy] That the mother of her Lord, and his, was come thither: the Jews ought not to object to this, who affirm, that the embryo's, or infants in their mother's womb, sung the song at the Red-sea, and praised God (*e*).

45 And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

Meaning Mary, a woman, a very young woman, and who had had things very incredible to nature and reason told her; and yet she believed, without objecting thereto, or requiring a sign; tacitly referring to the unbelief of Zacharias, who was a man, a man in years, a priest by office; and yet had been very incredulous in a thing that was much more possible; because there had been instances of it before, in Sarah, Hannah, and Manoah's wife; than what was related to the virgin, of which there had been none; and which to reason, and with men, was impossible: and happy indeed is every one that has true faith in any degree; for faith is the faith of God's elect, and is both a fruit and evidence of electing grace, which is the source of all blessings; it is the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit, and can never be lost: many are the blessings such as believe are in the possession of, and openly intitled to; as the justification of their persons, the remission of their sins, their adoption into the household of God, liberty at the throne of grace, and a right to the eternal inheritance: they enjoy much solid peace, joy, and comfort in their own souls; bring much glory to God, and shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation:

For there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord] These words may be considered, either as the subject matter of her faith, and be rendered in connexion with the former, thus, *Blessed is she that believed, that there shall be a performance, &c.* being fully persuaded, that what

(e) Targum in Psal. lxxviii. 27. Zohar in Exod. fol. 23. 3. T. Hieros. Sota, fol. 20. 3. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 75. 3.

the angel had told her, concerning the conception and birth of a son, concerning his name, and the greatness of his person, and the nature, extent, and duration of his kingdom, should be certainly and punctually fulfilled; or as a reason of her happiness, because there should be a sure accomplishment of them. Whatever God has spoken to any of his people, whether it be with respect to things temporal, spiritual, or eternal, shall be performed; as may strongly be concluded from the veracity of God, who cannot lie; and from his power, who is able to do all things; and from his faithfulness, which he will never suffer to fail; and from instances, and matters of fact; from the experience of the saints in all ages, who know, and are conscious to themselves, that not one of the good things the Lord God has spoken to them has ever failed, but that all have come to pass; see *Jeshua* xxiii. 14.

46 ¶ And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,

Either *Jehovah*, the Father, or the Son; who, as he was David's Lord, according to his divine nature, though his Son after the flesh, was in the same sense Mary's Lord, as well as her Son: and by *magnifying* him is meant, not making him great, for he cannot be made greater than he is; but ascribing greatness to him, even all the perfections of the Deity, and praising him on account of them; and also declaring and speaking well of his many and mighty works of power, goodness, grace, and mercy, and giving him the glory of them: this Mary did, not in lip and word only, but with her whole heart and soul, and with all the powers and faculties of it; being filled with the Holy Ghost, and under a more than ordinary influence of his, as her cousin Elisabeth was: and it is to be observed, that she all along speaks in the prophetic style, of things, as if they were done, which were doing, or would shortly be done.

47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

Which also may be understood, either of God the Father, who was her Saviour, both as the God of nature and providence; so the *Perfic* version renders it, "in God that gives me life;" and who had supported, maintained, and preserved her life; and as the God of grace, who has contrived the scheme of salvation, fixed upon, and appointed Christ to be the Saviour; and who saves by him, and therefore is sometimes said to be our Saviour, *Titus* iii. 4, 6. Or of Christ, the Son of God, who being truly and properly God, was fit to be a Saviour; and is a very suitable, able, and willing one; and which is the great encouragement to

sensible sinners, to look unto him, and be saved; and lays a solid foundation for rejoicing in him; since what he did as man, had hereby an infinite virtue and efficacy put into it, as was put into his blood, sacrifice, and righteousness; whereby the purposes designed were answered by them; and since he must be able to keep their immortal souls, which they commit unto him, and must have an interest with his Father, as their advocate, and a fulness to supply all their wants: the consideration of Christ, by Mary, as God her Saviour, as having an interest in him as a Saviour, and this her Saviour, God, gave her greater joy, than being the mother of him as man; and this her joy was not carnal, nor merely external, but inward and spiritual: it was a joy in her own spirit, and was excited there by the holy Spirit of God.

48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

Meaning, either her outward temporal *estate*, which was very low and mean: David's family was now very much reduced, it had its seat not at Jerusalem, but at Nazareth, in Galilee: Mary, of that house, was a poor virgin, and Joseph of the same, to whom she was betrothed, was a poor carpenter; and yet God passed by the rich and noble families of the Jewish people, and pitched upon this poor virgin to be the mother of the Messiah: or her *estate*, in a spiritual sense, which, as that of every son and daughter of Adam, was very low by the fall; for sin has run all mankind into debt, and they have nothing to pay: it has stripped them of original righteousness, and clothed them with rags; it has filled them with diseases, from the crown of the head to the sole of the feet; it has exposed them to a prison, into which being cast, they must lie, till they have paid the uttermost farthing; and has left them hopeless and helpless, poor and miserable, and blind and naked: but God has remembered his elect, in this their low estate, and has provided a Saviour for them, and sent him to deliver them out of it; because his mercy endures for ever; and of this Mary was sensible, and therefore rejoiced in God her Saviour:

For behold, from henceforth all generations] Not Jews only, but Gentiles also,

Shall call me blessed] Both on account of her Son she had now conceived, and was bearing; because she was the mother of our Lord, who had reason so to conclude, from the nature of the thing, and from the words of the angel, and of Elisabeth, *Y.* 28, 42. and much more than Leah had, who said something like this, at the birth of her second son, *Gen.* xxx. 13. and also on account of her interest

terest in Christ, as God her Saviour, in whom she was blessed with all spiritual blessings; so that she was truly blessed, and might well be called so.

49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.

With respect to the incarnation of Christ, a new, a great, and unheard of thing; in causing her, though a virgin, to conceive, and also to bear such a son, who should be called *Jesus*, a Saviour, *Immanuel*, God with us; and who was no other than *the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and Prince of peace*: wherefore she describes God the author of it, by a proper periphrasis of him,

He that is mighty] Since this was a work of almighty power; and very justly adds,

And holy is his name] Seeing this was brought about without any impurity, through the overshadowing influence of the Holy Ghost; whereby the human nature was preserved from the infection of sin, was sanctified, and fit to be united to the Son of God, and to be a sacrifice for the sins of his people. This may also have regard to the great things God had done for her in a spiritual sense; in the choice of her to eternal life, in the redemption of her by the Messiah, and in her regeneration and sanctification; wherein God had displayed his sovereign grace and goodness, and his almighty power, in a way consistent with his justice and holiness.

50 And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.

Not with slavish fear of hell and damnation, but with reverence and godly fear; with a filial fear, with a reverential love of God, and affection for him; with that fear which springs from the goodness of God, which has that for its object, and is encouraged by it: and though this fear is not the cause and reason of the mercy of God, yet is descriptive of the persons towards whom it is exercised in various ways, and to whom it is openly shewn; they hereby appearing to be the vessels of mercy, afore-prepared to glory; and in whose redemption, mercy and truth have met together; and who, according to the abundant mercy of God the Father, have been begotten again; whose unrighteousnesses he has been merciful to, and whose sins he will remember no more: and it may have a particular regard to the incarnation of Christ, which in this chapter is said to be in remembrance of mercy; to be the mercy promised, and to come through the tender mercy of our God, *ψ. 54, 72, 78*. And which was a mercy Mary considered, not as peculiar to herself, but as extended to all that fear the Lord; not in that age only, but

From generation to generation] To the end of the world, to God's elect in all times and places, who should all be partakers of it, and sharers in it.

51 He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

Of almighty power, in the business of the incarnation, and in working out salvation for his people; which is done by his own arm, he being mighty to save, and travelling in the greatness of his strength; see *Isaiah lxi. 1, 5*.

He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts] Whom he always resists, and both in providence and grace, takes such methods, as tend to humble and confound them: here particularly, it may regard the proud and haughty Jews; who imagined nothing less, than that the Messiah would be born of one of the rich and noble families in Judea; that he would appear as a temporal prince, and set up a temporal kingdom in great state and splendor, and make them a free and flourishing people: when, instead of this, he was to be born of a poor virgin, of whom they disdainfully say, *Is not his mother called Mary?* who was of Nazareth in Galilee, of which it is said, *Shall Christ come out of Galilee?* or any good thing out of Nazareth? A virgin betrothed to a carpenter, and her son of that business also, with which both were flouted; and because of this meanness, the Messiah was rejected by them; and thus were they scattered and confounded in their imaginations.

52 He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.

As mighty kings and emperors from their thrones, as he often does, in the course of his providence; setting up one, and putting down another: or the mighty angels, from their seats of bliss and happiness in heaven; who rebelling against God, opposing the incarnation of Christ, taking it ill, that the human nature should be advanced above theirs, were cast down to hell; and are reserved in chains of darkness, to the judgment of the great day: or this may have respect to the putting down the monarchies and kingdoms of this world, by the kingdom of the Messiah, to be set up; which, though it at first was mean and despicable, like a stone cut out of a mountain, will increase, spread, and break in pieces, and destroy all other kingdoms:

And exalted them of low degree] As David to the throne of Israel, from the sheepfold, and following the ewes great with young; and now his house and family, which were sunk very low, by raising of his seed, of a poor virgin in his family, unto Israel, a Saviour Jesus; in whose days the poor had the Gospel

Gospel preached, and received it; these were chosen and called: the great things of the Gospel were revealed to babes, and hid from the wise and prudent; and beggars were raised from the dunghill, to sit among princes, and to inherit the throne of glory: a method, which God in his infinite wisdom and grace has been pleased to take, more or less, in all ages of time; for not many mighty and noble, are called by grace; but usually the foolish, the weak, and the base things of the world.

53 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.

Such as earnestly desired and longed after the coming of the Messiah, as good old Simeon, and Anna the prophets; and those that looked for redemption in Israel, to whom she spake: and all such persons as heartily desire salvation by Christ, and breathe after the forgiveness of their sins through his blood, and thirst after his righteousness, and long for communion with him, and a greater knowledge of him, and more conformity to him, and pant after his word and ordinances; these are filled, sooner or later, with a sense of their interest in Christ, and his salvation; with a view of the full and free forgiveness of their sins, and with his righteousness they hunger after; and with every good thing they stand in need of, with joy and peace, with food and gladness, even to satisfaction; so that they can say with Jacob, they have enough, yea, all things; seeing Christ is theirs, and all things with him:

And the rich he hath sent empty away] Not the rich in this world's goods, though such who trust in their wealth, and boast of their riches, or do not make a proper use of them, God in his providence, sometimes strips them of all, and turns them into the world naked and empty; much less the rich in grace, who are often the poor of the world; and who, though they seem to have nothing, yet possess all things, and are full: but such who are rich in their opinion, and in their own works; and trust in their righteousness, and despise others; these, as they come full of themselves to the throne of grace, as the Pharisee, are *sent empty away*; without any token of the love and favour of God, or any blessing from him: and as they come to ordinances in their own strength, and trust in the performance of them, they go away empty, as they came; these are dry breasts unto them, whilst they are full breasts of consolation to the poor in spirit, and to all meek and humble souls: and what is still worst of all, notwithstanding all their good works they boast of, and trust in, they will be sent away at the last judgment from the presence of Christ, as not known by him, and as workers of iniquity.

54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of *his* mercy;

Meaning, not the natural posterity of Jacob, or Israel in general, but the elect of God among them; for all were not Israel who were of Israel; and not them only, but also all the chosen ones among the Gentiles; who, with the former, make up the whole Israel of God, in a spiritual and mystical sense: these are the Israel God has chosen, redeemed, and calls by his grace, and are here styled *his servant*, as Israel is frequently called, *Isai.* xli. 8. and chap. xlv. 21. The word signifies a *child*, as well as a *servant*; and may design, either the weak and helpless condition God's elect are in by nature, which calls for, and requires divine help and assistance; or the relation they stand in to him, being his adopted children, and which is the reason of his helping them: and which signifies, to take them by the hand, and lift them up, and support and uphold them; and supposes them to have been fallen down, and unable to raise themselves up; but God having laid help for them on one that is mighty, sent him to take upon him their nature; and by obeying, suffering, and dying for them, to help them out of their state of sin and misery; and to uphold them with the right hand of his righteousness, and bring them safe to glory; and all this,

In remembrance of his mercy] Which he had in his heart towards them, and had promised in his covenant to them: the mercy of God, is the spring and source of redemption; mercy provided a Redeemer, and a ransom; and it is owing to it, that the Redeemer came; and he, in his love and pity, performed the work: and therefore salvation is to be ascribed, not to works of righteousness done by men, but to the abundant mercy of God our Saviour.

55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.

To David, of whose family Mary was; and to Jacob, or Israel, of whose stock she was; and to Isaac, in whom the seed was to be called; and particularly,

To Abraham and to his seed for ever] Not his natural, but his spiritual seed; both among Jews and Gentiles, to the end of the world; to these God promised this mercy of a Saviour and Redeemer, and to these he performs it, and will to all generations.

56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

That is, she continued with Elisabeth, as the Syriac and Persic versions express, about the space of three months; in which time, she had full satisfaction.

faction of the truth of the sign the angel had given her; namely, of Elisabeth's conception and pregnancy, for by this time she was ready to lie in; and she must now be fully assured, that she was with child herself: this space of three months, is a term of time fixed by the Jewish doctors, to know whether a woman is with child or not, as in case of divorce or death: the rule runs thus (f); "Every woman that is divorced, or becomes a widow, lo, she may not marry, nor be betrothed, until she waits, *למשך תשעים* "ninety days" (that is, three months) exclusive of the day in which she is divorced, or her husband dies, and of the day in which she is betrothed; that so it may be known, whether she is with child or not, in order to distinguish between the seed of the former, and the seed of the second husband." And so in the case of marrying the wife of a brother, that died without issue (g), and of new married couples mistaking their spouses (h):

And returned to her own house] At Nazareth, in Galilee; and now it was, that Joseph, to whom she was betrothed, perceived she was with child; and suspecting evil, had a mind to put her away privately; but was informed by an angel of God in a dream, of the whole matter; and was advised and encouraged to take her to wife, which he accordingly did; see *Matt. i. 18—20*.

57 ¶ Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.

The nine months, which is the full time of a woman's going with child, were now complete; for in the sixth month of Elisabeth's pregnancy, or when she had been gone six months with child, the angel acquainted Mary with it, and she had staid about three months with her; but now had left her, to shun the company which would be at the delivery of her; though some think, she staid till that time was over, which is not so probable; and so her reckoning being out, and the time come,

That she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son] According to the angel's prediction both to Zacharias and Mary, *x. 13, 36*.

58 And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.

That lived in Hebron, and the parts adjacent, whether of the house of Aaron, or of the tribe of Judah; to both which she was related, and who

dwelt near her, the priests in the city of Hebron, and the children of Judah in the places about it:

Heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her] Or *had magnified his mercy with her*; see *Gen. xix. 19*. in removing her barrenness, and so taking away her reproach from among men; in giving her strength to conceive, and bring forth a son, that was to be so great, as *the prophet of the Highest*; and more than a prophet, and greater than any born of women:

And they rejoiced with her] As the angel had foretold they should, *x. 14*. The Persian version reads, *with him, Zacharias*, having rendered the other clause thus, though wrongly, "hearing that God had poured out his mercy on the house of Zacharias;" see *Rom. xii. 15*.

59 And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.

The precise time fixed in the original institution of the ordinance of circumcision, *Gen. xvii. 12*, though this was not always attended to, but circumcision was sometimes deferred to another time; yet keeping the exact time was judged most commendable and praise-worthy; see the note on *Phil. iii. 5*.

They came to circumcise the child] That is, the neighbours and cousins of Elisabeth, who were at the time of her delivery; eight days after they came again to be at the circumcision of the child: who was the operator is not known; nor was there any particular person appointed for this service; but any one might do it, whether ecclesiastic or laic, men or women, father or mother, or any other friend: for the rule is (i), "All are fit to circumcise; even an uncircumcised person, and a woman, and a minor, may circumcise in a place where there is no man; but a Gentile may not circumcise at all." The circumcision of John seems to be performed in Zacharias's house, and by one of those that came; for Zacharias being dumb, could not say the blessing which the circumciser was obliged to say: nor indeed could he say that which as the father of the child belonged to him; concerning which, take the following account (k): "The circumciser blesses before he circumcises, saying, Blessed is he that hath sanctified us by his precepts, and hath commanded us concerning circumcision. If he circumcises the son of his friend, or if he circumcises his own son, he blesses him with *this* blessing; "And hath commanded us to circumcise a son." And the father

(f) Maimon, Hilch. Gerushin, c. 11. §. 18. Vid. T. Bab. Beccor. fol. 47. 1.

(g) Misn. Yebamot, c. 4. §. 10. T. Hieros. Yebamot, fol. 6. 1. T. Bab. ibid. fol. 34. 2. & 35. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Yebum, c. 1. §. 19. T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 47. 1.

(h) Misn. Yebamot, c. 3. §. 10.

(i) Maimon, Hilch. Milah, c. 2. §. 1.

(k) Ibid. c. 3. §. 1—3.

"ther of the son blesses with another blessing; Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the king of the world, who hath sanctified us by his precepts, and hath commanded us to enter him into the covenant of Abraham our father.—If his father is not there, they do not say this other blessing.—And if there are any standing there they say, As he hath brought him into the covenant, so bring him to the law, and to matrimony, and to good works. And after that, the father of the child, or the circumciser, or one of those that stand by, blest, saying, Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, who sanctified the beloved (Isaac) from the womb, &c." How many of Elisabeth's neighbours and relations were present at this ceremony, is not related; but the Jews require ten persons as witnesses of it; for they say (^l), that "Testimonies worthy of belief, in Israel, are ten; the witnesses of the covenant of circumcision, are ten; the witnesses of a dead person, ten," &c. And at this time also it was usual to give the child a name, which was not by divine appointment, but was a custom that prevailed among them; which took its rise from Abraham, having his name changed at the time when circumcision was enjoined him, Gen. xvii. 5, 10. and from the naming and circumcision of Isaac, mentioned together, Gen. xxi. 3, 4.

And they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father] As the neighbours of Naomi gave a name to the son of Boaz and Ruth, calling him Obed, Ruth iv. 17. This they took upon them to do, because that Zacharias was deaf and dumb; but why they should call him by his name, cannot well be accounted for, it not being usual to call the father and the son by the same name; unless they were desirous of continuing the same name in the family, which had been famous in Israel for a prophet, and a priest: to call children by Gentile names was not lawful. In the Targum on Amos vi. 1. it is said, "Wo to them that name their children after the names of the Gentiles."

60 And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John.

That is, Elisabeth:

Not so, but he shall be called John] Knowing that this was the name wherewith the angel said he should be called; either by divine revelation, she being filled with the holy Ghost, y. 41. or by information of her husband, who, doubtless, in writing, gave her an account of all that the angel had said unto him.

61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.

Her neighbours and relations, said,

There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name] From whence it appears, that it was usual to give names to children after their ancestors, relations, and friends. The Perfic version renders it, "in thine Israel there is not any one of this name:" but this could not be true; for the name of Jochanan, or John, was a name very common among the Israelites, though not in Elisabeth's family, or her husband's.

62 And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called.

Who was deaf as well as dumb; otherwise there would have been no occasion to have signs made to him: and so the word used, in y. 20. signifies both deaf and dumb. These signs were made by hands or head; for such used to be made to a dumb man. According to the canon (^m), a dumb man nods, and נרמץ "and is nodded, or beckoned to:" and which beckoning one of the commentators (ⁿ) says, is a sign which is expressed either by the hands or head. Such a method as these took with Zacharias, about the name of his son, is directed to in case of a father's deafness, in relation to knowing who is his first-born (^o): "A father that is dumb, they search or examine him in the way they search for divorces; if he makes signs, or writes, that this is his first-born, lo! this takes the double portion."

How he would have him called] By what name, Zacharias or John; and they were right in applying to him, to whom it most properly belonged to give a name to his child.

63 And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all.

That is, he made signs for one, for as yet he could not speak. The Perfic version renders it ink, and the Ethiopic, a book, and the Vulgate Latin, a note-book. The word signifies a little table, such as they used to write not only upon, but in; and was sometimes of brass (^p), sometimes of wood, and sometimes of wax (^q), on which they wrote with a style or pen;

And wrote, saying, His name is John] Not that he must be, or shall be, so called; but this is his name, and no other; being what the angel had given him before his conception, and Zacharias now confirms:

And

(^m) Misa. Gittin, c. 5. §. 7.

(ⁿ) Bartenora in ibid.

(^o) Maimon. Hilch. Neehalot, c. 2. §. 15. & 4. 1.

(^p) Harpocraton. Lex. p. 244.

(^q) Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 2. c. 30.

(^l) Pirke Eliezer, c. 19.

And they marvelled all] They were astonished, not so much at the new name brought into the family, as at the agreement between Elisabeth and Zacharias in this point, when the latter was both deaf and dumb; they knowing nothing, as yet, of the angel's message to him.

64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue *loosed*, and he spake, and praised God.

As soon as ever the child was named, and so all things accomplished which the angel had foretold;

And his tongue loosed] The impediments of speech were removed, and the use of his tongue and lips was restored unto him:

And he spake and praised God] For the safe delivery of his wife; for the birth of his son, the forerunner of Christ; for the conception of the Messiah; for God's gracious regards to his church and people, in these instances; and for the restoration of speech and hearing to himself, of which he had been some time deprived for his unbelief.

65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill-country of Judea.

That is, the fear of God, an awful reverence of the divine majesty; they perceived the hand of God was in these things, and which made very serious impressions upon their minds, and they thought and spoke of them with great solemnity; see *Acts* ii. 43. and v. 11.

And all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill-country of Judea] The several things relating to the appearance of the angel to Zacharias in the temple; his message to him; the striking him deaf and dumb; the conception of Elisabeth, who had been barren; the birth of her son; the unusual name given him; and the more unusual manner in which it was given; and the opening of Zacharias's mouth, and the loosening of his tongue upon this, were reported, and commonly talked of by all people in that part of Judea, where the parents of John dwelt.

66 And all they that heard *them* laid *them* up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.

The above things,

Laid them up in their hearts] Treasured them up in their memories, and often thought of them in their minds, what should be the meaning, and what would be the issue of them:

Saying, What manner of child shall this be?] What will he be, or come to? and what is it that he shall do? surely he must be designed in providence to be put into some high station, and for some eminent work and service; since so many, and such great things, have gone before, and attended his birth:

And the hand of the Lord was with him] Which may intend the special care, and peculiar providence of God in preserving his life, giving him health, causing him to grow strong and robust, and in stature of body, and in endowments of mind; and also the communications of grace unto him, and the gracious presence of God with him, so soon as he was capable of enjoying them; as likewise a Spirit of prophecy, which is sometimes signified by *the hand of the Lord*; and the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit; which, in process of time, appeared in him, qualifying him for his high office and work: "the hand of the Lord," with the Jews, is the holy Ghost: thus they interpret *1 Chron.* xxviii. 19. *all in writing*, this is the Masora; *from the hand of the Lord*, וּרְחוּ חֲקוּרָה "this is the holy Ghost (r)."

67 ¶ And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,

With a Spirit of prophecy, as his wife Elisabeth had been before, *y. 41.*

And prophesied, saying] The following things, relating to the Messiah, his incarnation and redemption by him; to the accomplishing of the covenant, oath, promise and mercy of God to his people; and to his son, the forerunner of Christ; and to his work and office, in the various parts and branches of it, which he should perform. Whence it appears, that the following song is of divine inspiration; and that Zacharias *spoke it as he was moved by the Holy Ghost*, as the prophets of old did.

68 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

This was a form of blessing of long standing, *Psalms* lxxii. 18. and very likely was in use, more or less, ever since Israel was distinguished from other nations, became a body politic, and were settled in the land of Canaan, in the enjoyment of peculiar privileges, both civil and religious; see other forms before it in *Genesis* ix. 26. and chap. xxiv. 27. and *Exod.* xviii. 10. And now, this was very near being antiquated, and out of date; for upon the birth of Christ, the Son of God manifest in the flesh, the New-Testament-form of blessing runs, as in *2 Cor.* i. 3. *Eph.* i. 3. *1 Peter* i. 3. The reason of its being now made use of might be, because the Messiah, the principal subject of this song,

song, was peculiarly promised unto Israel, was raised up for them, and sent unto them. To bless God, is not to invoke a blessing on him; for there is none greater than he to ask one of; nor does he stand in need of any, being the Creator, who is blessed for ever in himself, and is the fountain of blessedness to his creatures: and therefore, also, cannot signify to confer a blessing on him, but to praise and glorify him, on account of the perfections of his nature; and the works of his hands; and to give thanks unto him for all mercies, spiritual and temporal; and especially for Jesus Christ, his mission, incarnation, and salvation by him: which are the things the God of Israel is blessed for in this song:

For he hath visited and redeemed his people] As he did Israel of old, *Exod. iii. 16, 17.* when the Lord looked upon them, and delivered them out of the bondage of Egypt, and which was a type and resemblance of redemption by Christ; and to which reference here seems to be had. The *people* here said to be *visited and redeemed*, design all the elect of God, not only among the Jews but Gentiles also; all those whom God has chosen to be his people, and has in his covenant taken and declared to be such; whom he has given to Christ, as his people and portion; for whose sins he was stricken, and made reconciliation, and whom he saves from their sins. The act of *visiting* them, as previous to redemption, may include God's look of love upon them from everlasting; his choice of them in Christ unto salvation; the appointment and provision of a Saviour for them; the covenant of grace made with them in Christ, the foundation and security of their salvation; and particularly the mission of Christ in human nature, in consequence of the counsel, covenant, and promise of God: or it designs his incarnation, for he was now actually conceived in the womb of the virgin; so that God had visited, and looked upon his people, and remembered his love and mercy, his covenant and promise to them: and the *redemption* of them, which was now said to be made, or done, because Christ was now sent to do it, and because it was as sure as if it was done, intends the spiritual and eternal redemption of them by the price of his blood, from the slavery of sin, the bondage of the law, and curse of it, and the captivity of Satan, and a deliverance out of the hands of every enemy; a redemption which reaches both to soul and body, and secures from all condemnation and wrath to come; and includes every blessing in it, as justification, forgiveness of sins, adoption, sanctification, and eternal life; and is a plenteous, full, complete, and everlasting one.

69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David;

Meaning the Messiah, whom God had now raised up:

In the house of his servant David] In David's family, he being now conceived by a virgin of his house; and who, in a little time, would be born in Bethlehem, the city of David. He is called *an horn of salvation*, because he is a powerful Saviour. *Horn* denotes power; it being that to a beast, as the arm is to a man, by which it defends itself, and pushes down its enemies; and *salvation* is the work Christ came to effect, and for which he was raised up, and sent: and a Saviour he is, and a mighty one, as appears from his doing and suffering what he has; as bearing all the sins of his people, and making reconciliation for them; obeying all the precepts of the law, and undergoing the penalty of it; being made a curse, and becoming obedient to death, even the death of the cross: as also, from his delivering them from sin, Satan, and the law, which no other could have done; and from his grappling with, conquering, spoiling, and destroying all his and our enemies. Moreover, the word *horn* signifies regal power, honour, and dignity; see *Dan. vii. 24.* and so may not only denote the work of Christ as a Saviour, but his office also as a King, who in the discharge of that is likewise a Saviour; for he not only rules and governs, but protects, defends, and preserves his people, by his power; see *1 Sam. ii. 10. Psalm cxxxii. 17.*

70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

Which shows not only the veracity and faithfulness of God in his promises, but the early intimations that were given by him concerning the Messiah: for it follows,

Which have been since the world began] Or from the beginning of the world; ever since the first hint of the Messiah, as *the seed of the woman, that should bruise the serpent's head*, was given, he was more or less spoken of. Adam, the first prophet, seems to have respect to him, when he calls his wife Eve, which signifies *life*; and because she should be the mother of all living. Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of him, of his *second coming*, which supposes his *first*; and Lamech may be thought to have some regard to him, when he named his son *Noah*, and said what he did concerning him: Christ was spoken of to Abraham, as *his seed*, in whom all nations of the earth should be blessed; and God spake of him by the patriarch Jacob, under the name of *Shiloh*, as who should spring from the tribe of Judah, before the sceptre and lawgiver were departed from it. Moses fore-
told

told that there should arise a *prophet* from the midst of his brethren *like unto him*, to whom the Israelites were to hearken. David, the prophet, often speaks of him, particularly of his death, his resurrection from the dead, his ascension to heaven, and session at God's right hand; and the evangelical prophet Isaiah predicts his birth of a virgin, and testified beforehand of the *sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow*. Micah points out the very place of his birth; and Zachary describes the manner of his entrance into Jerusalem, as riding on an ass: to say nothing of what Jeremy, Ezekiel, Daniel, and others, have prophesied of him. It is a common saying of the Jews (*s*), that "All the prophets, all of them prophesied not, *למנוח המשיח* " but of the days of the Messiah." The men, by whom God spoke of the Messiah, of the mission of him, and of raising up this horn of salvation, for his people, were *prophets*; men endued with a Spirit of prophecy; *holy* men, who were sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and spake, as they were moved by him; and these all spake as if it were with one *mouth*; they all agree in their accounts concerning Christ, though they lived in different periods of time, from the beginning of the world.

71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;

This, and the two following verses, either contain and express the sum and substance of what God spake by the prophets; or point out the end or ends of his raising up *an horn of salvation*, or a Saviour for his people; namely, that they should be saved by him from their enemies: from sin, which wars against the soul, and threatens the destruction of it; from Satan, the avowed and implacable adversary of mankind; from the world, the seed of the serpent, which has always bore an enmity to the seed of the woman; from the law, the killing letter; and from death, the last enemy that is to be destroyed;

And from the hand of all that hate us] Which is only an illustration of the former sentence, or a repetition of it in other words; and designs the same as before.

72 To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;

By *mercy* is meant salvation by Christ, which springs from the mercy of God; the promise of which was an instance of mercy to the Jewish fathers under the Old-Testament, and also the performance of it; for they were saved by the grace

of our Lord Jesus, even as we: his blood was shed for the remission of sins that were past, and for the redemption of transgressions under the first Testament:

And to remember his holy covenant] Which was made between him and his Son from all eternity; and was, at various times, dispensed and manifested to the patriarchs, and eminent saints, as Adam, Noah, Abraham, &c. This is called an *holy* one; not only because it was made by, and between holy persons, and provided for the holiness of the people of God, both here, and hereafter; but because in the article of redemption and salvation by Christ, which is here more particularly regarded, care was taken to secure the glory of God's holiness and justice, as well as to display his grace and mercy. Now raising up, and sending Jesus a Saviour, shewed, that God was mindful of this covenant, and therefore sent redemption to his people.

73 The oath which he swore to our father Abraham,

When he swore by himself, because he could swear by no greater, that *in blessing he would bless him*; that *his seed should possess the gates of his enemies*, and in it *all the nations of the earth should be blessed*: all which have been fulfilled in Jesus the Messiah; see Gen. xxii. 16—18. Heb. vi. 13, 14.

74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,

What is said in this and the following verse, is the substance of the promised mercy, covenant, and oath:

That we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies] As before, in *v. 71*.

Might serve him without fear] One principal end of deliverance from spiritual enemies by Christ, is the service of God; and nothing lays a greater obligation on men to serve the Lord, and glorify him, than redemption by Christ; nor is there any thing that makes men more zealous of good works: spiritual and evangelical service, in distinction from the legal service and worship of God, is here meant; since it is said to be *without fear*, which the threatenings and curses of the law filled men with; but being delivered from it, they become free from that spirit of bondage unto fear, it genders to; as being delivered also from sin and Satan, they are without fear of hell and damnation; and from the world, they are without fear of men; and from death, they are without fear of that, through which many under the legal dispensation were *all their lifetime subject to bondage*. It is a saying of the

(1) T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2. & Sabbat, fol. 63. 1. Maimon. Hilchot Teshuva, c. 8. §. 7.

the Jews (*t*), that "Greater is he that serves from love, than he that serves from fear." But such sort of service is not of a man's self, or performed by his own power and strength, but is a *grant* from God, and owing to the influence of his Spirit and grace.

75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

Not in mere outward rites and legal ceremonies; but, as the saints serve, from principles of righteousness and true holiness; in which the new man is created, and of which the kingdom of God, or spiritual and internal religion consists; so in acts of piety and devotion towards God, and justice among men, which is the substance of the perfect and acceptable will of God:

Before him] It is one thing to serve the Lord with an outward appearance of holiness and righteousness before men, and another thing to be righteous before God, and to walk in all his commandments and ordinances, as in his sight:

All the days of our life] Which denotes the constancy and continuance of this service; it is not for a day or two, or only on festivals and sabbath-days, such as were under the Jewish dispensation, but every day we live. In the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Perfic, and Ethiopic versions, and in two copies of Beza's, and two of Stephens's, and in the Alexandrian copy, it is only read, *all our days*; but the Arabic version reads, as the generality of copies, and as we render it.

76 And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;

Here Zacharias turns himself to his son John, though an infant, and incapable of knowing what was said to him; and, for the sake of those that were present, describes his office and work; and says, that he should be *called*, that is, that he should *be*, and be accounted a *prophet*: for he was not only a preacher of Christ and his Gospel, but he also foretold the coming of the Messiah; and the vengeance that should fall on the Jewish nation for their unfruitfulness, impenitence, and unbelief: and *the prophet of the Highest*; that is, of God; as the Perfic version renders it, "of the most high God;" and by whom is meant, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose prophet, harbinger, and fore-runner John was; and so is a proof of Christ being the supreme, or most high God:

For thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his ways] As the angel had suggested in *Y. 17.* and as was prophesied of him in *Isaiah xl. 3.* *Malachi iii. 1.* see the note on *Matthew iii. 3.*

77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,

This is still said of John, and belongs to his work and office; though the Syriac and Arabic versions read, "that he may give;" as if it was spoken of the Lord, before whose face John was to go, and whose ways he was to prepare: by *salvation* is meant, not a temporal salvation, or a deliverance from the Roman yoke, the Jews were expecting, for John gave no intimation of any such salvation; but of a spiritual and eternal salvation, and of Christ himself, the author of it; who is often called *salvation*, because he was appointed to this business, was fitted for it, and has effected it; and there is salvation in him, and in no other: the *knowledge* of this, is not merely notional and speculative, but experimental, approbative, fiducial, appropriating, sure, and certain; and is more excellent than any other kind of knowledge whatever: and this is a *gift*; it is not what is attained unto, and acquired by application, diligence, and industry, as other sort of knowledge; but is a gift of God, though in the use of means, and through the ministry of the word: and so John is said to give it ministerially, he being an instrument in the hand of God, whereby souls came to the knowledge of salvation by Christ, and believed in him: it was communicated by God through his ministry,

Unto his people] Meaning not the people of John the Baptist, the Jews, though it was true of God's elect among them; but the people of Christ: and that not all mankind, who are his by creation; but a special people, whom the Father has given him, and he has purchased by his blood; whom he conquers by his grace, and makes a *willing people in the day of his power*: to these, and only these, is the knowledge of salvation by Christ given; for none else are appointed to it, and for no other is it wrought out. It follows,

By the remission of their sins] The sense of which is, either that salvation is by the forgiveness of sin, and lies in it, that being a principal part of it; see *Eph. i. 7.* Sins are debts; forgiving them, is a remitting these debts, a loosing them, or the obligation to payment, which is done freely and fully, for Christ's sake, and through his blood; and herein lies the blessedness and salvation of men; see *Rom. iv. 6, 7.* Or else, that the knowledge of salvation was conveyed through the ministry of John, not by preaching the works of the law, but the doctrine of remission of sins by Christ; see

Mark

(*t*) T. Bab. Sotâ, fol. 31. 1. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Teshuva, c. 10. §. 1, 2.

Mark i. 4. John i. 29. and which is the sum and substance of the Gospel, as it was ordered to be preached by Christ, and was preached by his apostles. The Alexandrian copy reads, *our sins*.

78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us.

Or bowels of mercy, to which the forgiveness of sin is owing; the source and spring of pardon, is the free grace and abundant mercy of God; it takes its rise from thence, though it is channelled in the blood and sacrifice of Christ; and which no way derogates from, but rather heightens the riches of God's grace and mercy: for it was mercy, that moved God to enter into a covenant with his Son, in which forgiveness of sin is promised; and it was mercy to set forth his Son, in his eternal purposes and decrees; and to send him forth in the fulness of time, to shed his blood for the remission of sins; it was the mercy of God to us, that provided a lamb for a burnt-offering, and then accepted of the sacrifice and satisfaction of his Son, in our room and stead; and forgave all our sins for his sake; and whatever the pardon of our sins cost God and Christ, it is all free grace and mercy to us: it is owing, not to the absolute mercy of God, or to the mercy of God as an absolute God, but to the mercy of *our God*; our God in Christ, our covenant God and Father, whose bowels yerned towards us, and whose pity is that of a tender parent:

Whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us] The word *ανατολη*, here used, and is translated *the dayspring*, is the same which the Septuagint use, in Jer. xxiii. 5; Zech. iii. 8. and vi. 12. where the Messiah is spoken of, under the name of *the branch*: and undoubtedly the Messiah Jesus is intended here, who is *the man, the branch*, who has grown up out of his place; not from below, but from above; and who is the *phosphorus*, or bringer of light, that bright and morning-star, that Sun of righteousness, who has light in himself, and communicates light to others; even light natural, spiritual, and eternal; and with his rays and beams of light, life and love, refreshes, exhilarates, and warms the hearts of his people. And by the *visit* he has made in our horizon, is meant his assumption of human nature; which, like a friendly visit, proceeded from pure love to the children of God; and was a drawing near unto them, for it was a taking on him their nature, in which he represented their persons; and was done through much difficulty and great condescension, since he was *in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with him*; and his stay on earth in this

nature, was but for a little while; so that on all accounts, it may be truly called a *visit*: and which, as the remission of sin, is wholly owing to *the tender mercy of our God*; who put him upon it, called him to it, sent him forth *made of a woman, and in the likeness of sinful flesh*, to obtain eternal redemption, in which *mercy and truth met together*. The end and design of this visit, are signified in the next verse; for the following words belong to *the dayspring from on high*, and not to John the prophet of the Highest.

79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

God's elect among the Jews, who were not only in a state of unregeneracy, which is a state of darkness, ignorance, and unbelief; but in the darkness of the legal dispensation, and at this time under more than ordinary darkness and ignorance; having lost the knowledge of the righteousness of God, and of the spirituality of his law, the true sense of the scriptures, and right notions of the Messiah; being led by *blind guides, the scribes and Pharisees*: and, were as it were also,

In the shadow of death] In a state seemingly irrecoverable, when Christ the great light arose, and shone upon them; and communicated spiritual light, life, and heat unto them; see *Isai. ix. 2.* compared with *Matt. iv. 13—16.* Though Christ is also a light, to lighten his chosen ones among the Gentiles, *Luke ii. 32.* but the Jews seem chiefly to be intended here:

To guide our feet into the way of peace] Which we knew not: not that he came to teach us how to make our peace with God, but to make peace for us by the blood of his cross; and so by his Spirit and word, lead us into the true way of enjoying spiritual peace here, and eternal peace hereafter.

80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

That is, John, the son of Zacharias and Elisabeth, grew in stature of body, and increased in wisdom and knowledge, and fortitude in his soul:

And was in the deserts] Or desert, as the Syriac, Persian, and Ethiopic versions read; not in the wilderness of Judea, where he came preaching, but either of Ziph or Maon, which were near to Hebron; see *1 Sam. xxiii. 14, 24, 25. 1 Kings xv. 54, 55.* he was not brought up in the schools of the prophets, nor in the academies of the Jews, or at the feet of any of their Rabbins and Doctors; that it might appear he was not taught and sent of men, but

but of God : nor did he dwell in any of the cities, or larger towns, but in deserts ; partly that he might be fitted for that gravity and austerity of life he was to appear in ; and that it might be clear he had no knowledge of, nor correspondence with Jesus, whose forerunner he was, and of whom he was to bear testimony, till such time he did it ; and in this solitude he remained,

Till the day of his shewing unto Israel] Either till the time came that he was to appear before, and be examined by the sanhedrim, that judged of persons fitness and qualifications for the priesthood, in order to be admitted to it : which should have been when he was thirty years of age, but that he was designed for other service ; or rather therefore till he appeared in his prophetic office, and shewed himself to the people of Israel ; to whom he came *preaching the doctrines of repentance and remission of sins*, administering the ordinance of baptism, giving notice of the near approach of the Messiah, and pointing him out unto the people.

CHAP. II.

In this chapter we have an account of the birth and infancy of our Lord Jesus. Joseph goeth to Bethlehem to be taxed with Mary his wife, where Christ is born, y. 1—8. An angel appearing to the shepherds, declareth to them his birth : for which the angels praise God with a song, y. 9—15. The shepherds go to Bethlehem to see Christ, and having found him, they make this known, y. 16—19. and returning there, glorify God, y. 20. The circumcision of the child, who is called Jesus, y. 21 and is presented to God, y. 22—25. Simeon taketh him into his arms, and blesteth him, and propheseth concerning him, y. 26—35. as likewise did Anna, y. 36—39. His parents going up to Jerusalem, carry him with them, being twelve years old, y. 40—44. He disputeth with the doctors in the temple, y. 45—51. Returneth to Nazareth, and is subject to his parents, and increaseth in wisdom, stature, and grace, y. 51, 52.

1 **A**ND it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

That is, when John the Baptist was born, and Christ was conceived, and his mother pregnant with him, and the time of his birth drew on. The Ethiopic version reads, “ in that day ; ” as if it was the same day in which John was circumcised, and Zacharias delivered the above song of praise :

That there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus] The second emperor of Rome ; the name Cæsar, was common to all the emperors, as Pharaoh to the Egyptians, and afterwards Ptolemy. His name,

Augustus, was not his original name, but *Thurinus* ; and was given him, after he became Cæsar, to express his grandeur, majesty, and reverence ; and that by the advice of Munatius Plancus : when others would have had him called *Romulus*, as if he was the founder of the city of Rome (a) : by him a decree was made and published,

That all the world should be taxed] Or registered, or enrolled ; for this was not levying a tax, or imposing tribute upon them, but a taking an account of the names of persons, and of their estates ; and which might be in order to lay a tax upon them, as afterwards was : for the payment of a tax, there was no need of the appearance of women and children ; and so the Arabic version renders it, “ that the names of the whole habitable world might be described or written down.” Such an enrollment had been determined on by Augustus, when at Tarracon in Spain, twenty-seven years before ; but he was diverted from it by some disturbances in the empire, so that it was deferred to this time, in which there was a remarkable interposition of divine providence ; for had this enrollment been made then, in all likelihood it had not been done now, and Joseph and Mary would not have had occasion to have come to Bethlehem : but so it must be ; and thus were things ordered by an infinite, and all-wise providence to effect it : nor did this enrollment reach to all the parts of the known world, but only to the Roman empire ; which because it was so very large as it was, and in the boasting language of the Romans was so called, as Ptolemy Evergetes (b) calls his kingdom, *κοσμος*, “ the world.” Though some think only the land of Judea is meant, which is called *the earth*, in Luke xxi. 26. and *all the world*, in Acts xi. 28. but the other sense seems more agreeable ; and so the Syriac version renders it, “ that all the people of his empire might be enrolled ; ” and the Persian version, “ that they should enroll all the subjects of his kingdom ; ” and is justified by the use of the phrase for the Roman empire, in several passages of scripture, *Rom. i. 8.* and chapter x. 18. *Rev. iii. 10.* and chapter xiii. 3. Now at the time of this enrollment, and under this august emperor, and when the whole world was in a profound peace, was the Messiah born, the King of kings, and the only Potentate ; the *Shiloh*, the Peaceable and Prosperous, the Prince of peace, and Lord of life and glory ; and that, in order to redeem men from that worse subjection and bondage they were in to sin, Satan, the law, and death, than they were to the Roman emperor. The Jews say (c), the Son of David shall not come, until the kingdom (of Edom,

or

(a) Suetonius in vita Octav. August. §. 7.

(b) Apud Fabricii Biblioth. Gr. tom. 2. p. 608.

(c) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 98. 2.

or Rome, as some copies read it, in others it is erased) shall be extended over all Israel, nine months, according to *Micah* v. 3. The gloss on it is, that is, "all the world," in which the Israelites are scattered.

2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

Or, "this was the first enrollment," or taxing in the Jewish nation; for there was another afterwards, when Judas the Galilean arose, and drew many after him, *Acts* v. 38.

When Cyrenius was governor of Syria] Or, "of Cyrenius governor of Syria;" that is, it was the first that he was concerned in; who not now, but afterwards, was governor of Syria; and because he had been so before Luke wrote this history; and this being a title of honour, and what might distinguish him from others of that name, it is given him; for as Tertullian says (*d*), Sentius Saturninus was now governor of Syria, when Cyrenius was sent into Judea to make this register, or taxing; and which is manifestly distinguished from that which was made during his being governor of Syria, when Archelaus was banished from Judea, ten or eleven years after Herod's death; which Josephus (*e*) gives an account of, and Luke refers to, in *Acts* v. 38. Moreover, the words will bear to be rendered thus, "and this tax, or enrollment, was made before Cyrenius was governor of Syria;" *מלואה*, being used for *מסלמה*, as in *John* i. 15, 30. This Cyrenius, is the same whom the Romans call *Quirinius*, and *Quirinus*. A governor of Syria had great power in Judea, to which it was annexed, when Cyrenius was governor there. It is reported of R. Gamaliel, that he went to take a licence, *מלואה בסוריה* "from a governor of Syria (*f*);" that is, to intercalate the year: and Syria was in many things like to the land of Judea, particularly as to tithes, and the keeping of the seventh year (*g*).

3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

Throughout Judea, Galilee, and Syria; men, women, and children:

Every one into his own city] Where he was born, and had any estate, and to which he belonged.

4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

Where he now lived, and worked at the trade of a carpenter; having for some reasons, and by one providence or another, removed hither from his native place:

Out of the city of Nazareth] Which was in Galilee, where he and Mary lived; and where he had espoused her, and she had conceived of the Holy Ghost:

Into Judea] Which lay higher than Galilee, and therefore he is said to go up to it:

Unto the city of David] Not what was built by him, but where he was born and lived; see *1 Sam.* xvii. 12.

Which is called Bethlehem] The place where, according to *Micah* v. 2. the Messiah was to be born, and was born; and which signifies the house of bread; a very fit place for Christ, the bread which came down from heaven, and gives life to the world, to appear first in. This place was, as a Jewish chronologer says (*b*), a *parasa* and half, or six miles from Jerusalem; though another of their writers, an historian and traveller, says (*i*), it was two *paras*, or eight miles; but Justin Martyr (*k*) says, it was but thirty-five furlongs distant from it, which is not five miles: hither Joseph came from Galilee,

Because he was of the house and lineage of David] He was of his family, and lineally descended from him, though he was so poor and mean; and this is the reason of his coming to Bethlehem, David's city,

5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

Whom also he had married, though he had not known her in a carnal way: she came along with him to be taxed and enrolled also, because she was of the same family of David, and belonged to the same city,

Being great with child] Very near her time, and yet, though in such circumstances, were obliged by this edict to come to Bethlehem; and the providence in it was, that she might lie in there, and so the prophecy in *Micah* v. 2. have its accomplishment: this was an instance, and an example, of obedience to civil magistrates.

6 ¶ And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

Were at Bethlehem, waiting to be called and enrolled in their turn:

(d) Contr. Marcion, l. 4. c. 19.

(e) Antiqu. l. 18. c. 1.

(f) Mishn. Ediot, c. 7. §. 7.

(g) T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 8. 7.

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(b) Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 14. 2.

(i) R. Benja-

min Iuin, p. 47.

(k) Apolog. 2. p. 75.

The days were accomplished that she should be delivered] Her reckoning was up, the nine months of her going with child were ended, and her full time to bring forth was come.

7 And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

At Bethlehem, as was predicted; and the Jews themselves own, that the Messiah is already born, and born at Bethlehem; see the note on *Matt.* ii. 1. Jesus is called Mary's *first-born*, because she had none before him; though she might not have any after him; for the first that opened the matrix, was called the first-born, though none followed after, and was *holy to the Lord*, *Exod.* xiii. 2. Christ, as to his human nature, was Mary's first-born; and as to his divine nature, God's first-born:

And wrapped him in swaddling clothes] Which shews, that he was in all things made like unto us, *sin only excepted*. This is one of the first things done to a new-born infant, after that it is washed, and its navel cut; see *Ezek.* xvi. 4. and which Mary did herself, having neither midwife nor nurse with her; from whence it has been concluded, that the birth of Jesus was easy, and that she brought him forth without pain, and not in that sorrow women usually do:

And laid him in a manger] The *Perfic* version serves for a comment; "She put him into the middle of the manger, in the place in which they gave food to beasts; because in the place whither they came, they had no cradle:" this shews the meanness of our Lord's birth, and into what a low estate he came; and that now, as afterwards, though Lord of all, yet had not where to lay his head in a proper place; and expresses his amazing grace, in that he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor: and the reason of his being here laid was,

Because there was no room for them in the inn] It seems that Joseph had no house of his own to go into, nor any relation or friend to receive him; and it may be, both his own father and Mary's father were dead, and therefore were obliged to put up at an inn; and in this there was no room for them, because of the multitude that were come thither to be enrolled: and this shews their poverty and meanness, and the little account that was made of them; for had they been rich, and made any considerable figure, they would have been regarded, and room made for them; especially since Mary was in the circumstances she was; and it was brutish in them to turn them into a stable when such was her case.

8 ¶ And there were in the same country

shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

For Bethlehem was a place of pasture: near to *Ephrata*, the same with Bethlehem, were the fields of the wood, *Psal.* cxxxii. 6. and the tower of Edar, or the tower of the flock, *Gen.* xxxv. 21, *Micah* iv. 8. and here David kept his father's sheep, *1 Sam.* xvii. 15. so that we need not wonder to hear of shepherds here,

Abiding in the field, watching over their flock by night] From whence it appears, that Christ was born in the night; and the (1) Jews say, that the future redemption shall be in the night; and *Jerom* says (m), it is a tradition of the Jews, that Christ will come in the middle of the night, as was the passover in Egypt: it is not likely that he was born, as is commonly received, at the latter end of December, in the depth of winter; since at this time, shepherds were out in the fields, where they lodged all night, watching their flocks: they were diligent men, that looked well to their flocks, and watched them by night, as well as by day, to preserve them from beasts of prey; they were, as it is in the Greek text, "keeping the watches of the night over their flock." The night was divided into four watches, the even, midnight, cock-crowing, and morning; and these kept them, as the Arabic version adds, "alternately:" some kept the flock one watch, and some another, while the rest slept in the tent, or tower, that was built in the fields for that purpose. There were two sorts of cattle with the Jews; there was one sort which they called, מרביות "the cattle of the wilderness;" that lay in the fields; and another sort which they called ביתיות "the cattle of the house;" that were brought up at home: concerning both which, they have this rule (n); "These are the cattle of the house, that lie in the city; the cattle of the wilderness, are they that lie in the pastures." On which one of their commentators (o) observes, "These lie in the pastures, which are in the villages, all the days of cold and heat, and do not go into the cities, until the rains descend." The first rain is in the month *Marchesvan*, which answers to the latter part of our *October*, and the former part of *November*; and of this sort seem to be the flocks those shepherds were keeping by night, the time not being yet come of their being brought into the city; from whence it appears, that Christ must be born before the middle of *October*, since the first rain was not yet come: To the shepherds, the first notice of Christ's birth was given; not to the princes and chief priests,

and

(1) *Izeror* *thammor*, fol. 73. 3.

(m) in *Matt.* xiv. 6.

(n) *Misa*, *Betz*, c. 5. §. 7.

(o) *Maimon*, in *ibid.*

and learned men at Jerusalem; but to weak, mean, and illiterate men whom God is pleased to choose and call, and reveal his secrets to; when he hides them from the wise and prudent, to their confusion, and the glory of his grace: and this was a presage of what the kingdom of Christ would be, and by, and to whom the Gospel would be preached.

9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

It may be Gabriel, who had brought the tidings of the conception of the Messiah to the virgin, and now the birth of him to the shepherds:

Came upon them] On a sudden, unexpectedly, at once, and stood by them, as some versions read; or rather, stood over them, over their heads, just above them; so that he was easily and perfectly seen by them:

And the glory of the Lord shone round about them] Or a very glorious and extraordinary light, shone with surprising lustre and brightness all around them; by which light they could discern the illustrious form of the angel that was over them:

And they were sore afraid] At the sight of such a personage, and at such unusual light and glory about them: they were not used to such appearances, and were awed with the majesty of God, of which these were symbols, and were conscious to themselves of their own sinfulness and frailty.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For he was not a messenger of bad, but of good tidings:

For, behold, I bring you good tidings] Tidings, that were both wonderful and amazing, and therefore a *behold* is prefixed to them, as well as to excite to attention; and which were good news, and glad tidings, for such the birth of Christ of a virgin is; in which the good-will, and amazing love of God to man, are displayed, and the promises and prophecies relating to him fulfilled; and the work of man's salvation, his peace, pardon, righteousness, &c. about to be accomplished, and so matter

Of great joy] Not carnal, but spiritual; not feigned, but real; not temporary, but lasting; even such as cannot be taken away, nor intermeddled with; and not small, but great, even joy unspeakable, and full of glory:

Which shall be to all people] Not to every individual of mankind; not to Herod and his courtiers, who were troubled at it; nor to the greater part of the Jewish nation, who when he came to

them received him not, but rejected him as the Messiah; particularly not to the chief priests, scribes and Pharisees, who, when they saw him, said, *This is the heir, let us kill him, and seize on the inheritance*; but to all that were waiting for him, and were looking for redemption in Israel; to all sensible sinners who rejoice at his birth, and in his salvation; see *Isaiah ix. 3, 6.* to all the chosen people of God, whether Jews or Gentiles, whom God has taken to be his covenant people, and has given to his Son as such, to redeem and save; to these the incarnation of Christ, with all the benefits resulting from it, is the cause of great joy, when they are made a willing people in the day of Christ's power.

11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

Day is here put for a natural day, consisting both of night and day; for it was night when Christ was born, and the angels brought the tidings of it to the shepherds. The particular day, and it may be, month and year, in which Christ was born, cannot be certainly known; but this we may be sure of, it was in the fulness of time, and at the exact season fixed upon between God and Christ in the counsel and covenant of peace: and that he was born, not unto, or for the good of angels; for the good angels stand in no need of his incarnation, sufferings, and death, having never fell; and as for the evil angels, a Saviour was never designed and provided for them; nor did Christ take on him their nature, nor suffer in their stead: wherefore the angel does not say, *unto us*, but *unto you*, unto you men; for he means not merely, and only the shepherds, or the Jews only, but the Gentiles also; all the children, all the spiritual seed of Abraham, all elect men; for their sakes, and on their account, and for their good, he assumed human nature; see *Isaiah ix. 6. Heb. ii. 14, 16.*

In the city of David] That is, Bethlehem, as in *Y. 4.* where the Messiah was to be born, as being, according to the flesh, of the seed of David, his son and offspring; as he is, according to his divine nature, his Lord and root. The characters of this new-born child follow, and which prove the tidings of his birth to be good, and matter of joy.

A Saviour] Whom God had provided and appointed from all eternity; and had been long promised, and much expected as such in time, even from the beginning of the world; and is a great one, being God as well as man, and so able to work out a great salvation for great sinners, which he has done; and he is as willing to save as he is able, and is a complete Saviour, and an only, and

an everlasting one: hence, his name is called **JESUS**, because he *saves* from sin, from Satan, from the law, from the world, from death, and hell, and wrath to come, and from every enemy.

Which is Christ the Lord? The Messiah spoken of by the prophets; the anointed of the Lord with the holy Ghost, without measure, to be a prophet, priest, and king in his church; and who is the true Jehovah, the Lord our righteousness, the Lord of all creatures, the Lord of angels, good and bad, the Lord of all men, as Creator, the Prince of the kings of the earth, the Lord of lords, and King of kings; and who is particularly the Lord of saints by his Father's gift, his own purchase, the espousal of them to himself, and by the power of his grace upon them: and the birth of such a person must needs be joyful, and is to be accounted good news, and glad tidings.

12 And this *shall* be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger.

When they should come to Bethlehem, and to the inn where Joseph and Mary were:

Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger] For though there might be many other children in the inn, yet none else in swaddling-clothes, at least lying in a manger: this sign would distinguish the new-born Saviour from all others; had not the angel given them this direction, they would never have thought to have looked for, and found him in such a place: and moreover, it might have been a stumbling to them, and an objection with them against his being Christ, the Lord; had they not been told beforehand where he was; but by this means this objection was prevented, and this stumblingblock was removed out of the way, and they were prepared to see him, embrace, and believe in him, in this mean condition.

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

With the angels that brought the tidings of Christ's birth to the shepherds:

A multitude of the heavenly host] Who being caused to fly swiftly, were at once with him, by his side, and about him; and which was a further confirmation of the truth of his message to them: these were angels, who are called *an host*, or army, the militia of heaven, the ministers of God, that wait upon him, and do his pleasure; and are sent forth to minister to his people, and encamp about them, preserve, and defend them; see *Gen. xxxii. 1, 2*. These are styled *an heavenly host*, because

they dwell in heaven; and to distinguish them from hosts and armies on earth; and said to be a *multitude*, for the angels are innumerable; there are thousands, ten thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand of them: it may be rendered *the multitude*, and may intend the whole company of angels, who were all of them together to sing the praises of God, and glorify him at the birth of the incarnate Saviour, as well as to adore him; since it is said, *When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him*, Heb. i. 6. and these were praising God; on account of the birth of Christ, and the redemption that was to be obtained by him, for elect men; which shews their friendly disposition to them, and how much they rejoice at their spiritual and eternal welfare; see *Luke xv. 10*. And thus, as at the laying of the foundation of the earth, as it is thought, these morning stars sang together, and all these sons of God shouted for joy, Job xxxviii. 7. they did the same when the foundation of man's salvation was laid in the incarnation of the Son of God; and saying,

14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men.

Which, with the following words, are not to be considered as a wish, that so it might be, but as an affirmation, that so it was; for the glory of God is great in the salvation, peace, and reconciliation of his people by Jesus Christ, even the glory of all his perfections; of his wisdom and prudence in forming such a scheme; of his love, grace and mercy, the glory of which is his main view, and is hereby answered; and of his holiness, which is hereby honoured; and of his justice, which is fully satisfied; and of his power in the accomplishment of it; and of his truth and faithfulness in fulfilling his covenant and oath, and all the promises and prophecies relating to it. Great glory from hence arises to God, who is in the highest heavens, and is given him by angels and saints that dwell there, and that in the highest strains; and by saints on earth too in their measure, and as they are able: the ground and foundation of which is what follows:

And on earth peace] By which is meant, not external peace, though at this time there was peace on earth all the world over; nor internal peace, as distinguished from that eternal peace which the saints enjoy in heaven; nor even peace made by Christ; for this, as yet, was not done on earth, but was to be made by the blood of his cross: rather Christ himself is here intended, who is called *the man, the peace*, Micah v. 5. and *our peace*, Eph. ii. 14. and was now on earth, being just born, in order to make peace with God, and reconciliation

for

for the sins of the people: and he is so called, because he is the author of peace between Jew and Gentile, which were at enmity with each other; by abrogating the ceremonial law, the cause of that enmity; by sending the Gospel to them, and converting some of each; and by granting the like privileges to them both; see *Eph. ii. 14—20.* and because he is the author of peace between God and elect sinners, who, through the fall, are at enmity against God, and enemies in their minds by wicked works unto him. Nor can they make their peace with God; they know not they way of it; nor are they disposed to it; nor can they approach to God to treat with him about terms of peace; nor can they do those things that will make their peace with God, as satisfying his justice, and fulfilling his law: Christ only is their peace-maker; he only is fit for it, being God and man in one person, and so a day's-man that can lay his hands on both, and has a concern in each, in things pertaining to God, and to make reconciliation for the sins of the people: he only is able to do it, and he has done it by the blood of his cross; and a very excellent peace it is he has made: it is made upon the most honourable terms, to the satisfaction of justice, and the magnifying of the law of God; and is therefore a lasting one, and attended with many blessings, such as freedom of access to God, and a right to all the privileges of his house; and the news of it are *glad tidings of good things*: and those angels that first brought the tidings of it, may be truly called, as some of the angels are by the Jews (*p*), מלאכי שלום "angels of peace." Moreover Christ may be said to be peace, because he is the donor of all true solid peace and real prosperity; both external, which his people have in the world, and with each other; and internal, which they have in their own breasts, through believing in him, and attending on his ordinances; and eternal, which they shall have for ever with him in the world to come. And now Christ being the peace on earth, is owing to

Good-will towards men] That is, to the free favour, good-will, and pleasure of God towards chosen men in Christ Jesus: that Christ was on earth as the peace-maker, or giver, was owing to God's good-will; not to angels, for good angels needed him not as such; and the angels that sinned were not spared, nor was a Saviour provided for them; but to men, and not to all men; for though all men share in the providential goodness of God, yet not in his special good-will, free grace, and favour: but to elect men, to whom a child was born, and a Son given, even the Prince of peace: it was from God's good-will to these persons,

whom he loved with an everlasting love in Christ, laid up goodness for them in him, blessed them with all spiritual blessings in him, and made a covenant with him for them; that he provided and appointed his Son to be the saviour and peace-maker; that he sent him into this world to be the propitiation for sin; and that he spared him not, but delivered him up into the hands of men, justice, and death, in order to make peace for them. The Vulgate Latin version, and some copies, as the Alexandrian, and Beza's most ancient one, read, "peace on earth to men of good-will;" and which must be understood, not of men that have a good-will of themselves, for there are no such men: no man has a will to that which is good, till God works in him *both to will and to do of his good pleasure*; wherefore peace, reconciliation, and salvation, are not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy: but of such who are the objects of God's good-will and pleasure, whom he loves, because he will love; and has mercy and compassion on them, and is gracious to them, because he will be so; and therefore chooseth, redeems, and regenerates them of his own will, and because it seems good in his sight. The Syriac and Persic versions read, "good hope to men;" as there is a foundation laid in Christ the peace, of a good hope of reconciliation, righteousness, pardon, life, and salvation for sinful men. The Arabic version renders it, "cheerfulness in men;" as there is a great deal of reason for it, on account of the birth of the Saviour and Peace-maker, the salvation that comes by him to men, and the glory brought thereby to God.

15 ¶ And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

The Persic version reads in the singular number, "the angel:"

Were gone away from them into heaven] From whence they came, and which was the place of their abode and residence; and therefore they are called *the angels of heaven*, where they always behold the face of God, hearken to the voice of his commandment, and go and come at his orders: and these having finished their embassy, delivered their message to the shepherds, and done all the work they came about, "departed from them;" and, as the Ethiopic version adds, "and ascended up into heaven;" and as soon as they were gone, immediately,

(p) Zohar in Exod. fol. 8. 1. & 98. 4.

The shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even to Bethlehem.] The place where the angel said the Saviour was born,

And see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.] From whence it appears, that it was not from diffidence of the matter, as questioning the truth of what the angel said, that they moved one another to go to Bethlehem; for they firmly believed the thing was come to pass, which the angel had told them of, and that what he said was from the Lord; nor did they act any criminal part, or indulge a vain curiosity, in going to Bethlehem to see what was done; for it seems to be the will of God that they should go, and for which they had a direction from the angel, and a sign given them by which they might know the new-born Saviour from any other infant, *ŷ. 12.* and which would also be a further confirmation of their faith, and by which they would be qualified not only as ear, but as eye-witnesses of the truth of this fact, to report it with greater certainty.

16 And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

In the night, leaving their flocks, to see their incarnate Lord, as Zaccheus hastened down from the tree to receive the Saviour. The wonderfulness of the vision, the importance of the thing related, the eagerness of their spirits to see the thing that was told them, put them on making quick dispatch, and hastening to the city with all speed:

And found Mary and Joseph.] As they had been directed by the angel, in the city of Bethlehem, in an inn there, and in a stable in the inn:

And the babe lying in a manger.] Where Mary had put it as soon as born, and had wrapped it in swaddling-clothes; because there was no room in the inn, and as the angel had told them they should find it, *ŷ. 12.*

17 And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

Or seen him, as the Arabic version reads, the child Jesus; or them, Joseph, Mary, and the child; or this whole affair, as had been related to them:

They made known abroad.] Not only in the inn, and among all the people there, but throughout the city of Bethlehem,

The saying which was told them concerning this child.] Both what the angel had told them concerning his birth, and what he was, and where he lay; and what Mary had told them concerning the notice she had from an angel of the conception of him, and the manner of it, and of what he should be:

and likewise what Joseph had told them, how an angel had appeared to him, and had acquainted him, after the conception of the child, that it was of the Holy Ghost; and was bid to call his name Jesus; as Mary also was, because he was to be the Saviour of his people from their sins: for, no doubt, but they had a conversation with Joseph and Mary about him; and as they could not fail of relating to them what they had seen and heard that night in the fields, it is reasonable to suppose, that Joseph and Mary would give them some account of the above things; which all make up the saying, or report, they spread abroad: the Perfic version reads, "what they had heard of the angel;" but there is no reason to confine it to that.

18 And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

What the shepherds related of what they had heard from the angel, and from Joseph and Mary, and what they had seen themselves;

Wondered at those things that were told them by the shepherds.] For though they expected the Messiah, and that he would be born at Bethlehem, yet they did not imagine that he would be born of such mean parents, and appear in such mean circumstances, and in so contemptible a place; and that shepherds, and not the princes of Israel, should have the first notice of it; and yet the account which these shepherds, who were plain-hearted men, and could never be thought to invent such a story, and spread it, and impose on men, without any interest in it, was very surprising; so that they knew not what to say to it, neither to deny, nor believe it: accordingly, the Perfic version renders the whole thus, "and whoever heard, "wondering, stuck at it;" hesitated about it; and yet astonished at the particulars of it; just as Christ's hearers were in *Luke iv. 22.* who wondered at his ministry, and the manner of it, and yet objected the meanness of his parentage and education.

19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

Which the shepherds had related to her:

And pondered them in her heart.] Or compared them in her mind, with what had been said to herself by the angel, and also by her husband, as well as what was said by Elisabeth at the time she made her a visit: but she said nothing of them to others, lest she should be thought an enthusiast, or a vain boaster; and therefore left things, till time should make a discovery of them in a proper way, and in the best season.

20 And

20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

Returned from Bethlehem, to the fields, and to their flock there:

Glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard] From Joseph and Mary:

And seen] As the babe lying in the manger;

As it was told unto them] By the angel: they glorified God on account of the birth of the Messiah; and praised him, wondering at his grace, and the high honour put upon them, that they should be acquainted with it; and that there was such an exact agreement between the things they had seen, and the angels account of them.

21 ¶ And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

According to the original institution of circumcision, *Gen. xvii. 12.* and which was strictly observed by religious persons, as by the parents of our Lord here, and by those of John the Baptist, chap. i. 59. Hence the apostle Paul reckons this among his privileges, that he could have boasted of as well as other Jews, *Phil. iii. 5.* see the note there. But it may be asked, Why was Christ circumcised, since he had no impurity of nature, which circumcision supposed; nor needed any circumcision of the heart, which that was a symbol of? To which it may be replied, Though he needed it not himself, it was the duty of his parents to do it, since all the male seed of Abraham were obliged to it; and that law, or ordinance was now in force; and besides, it was necessary, that he might appear in the likeness of sinful flesh, who was to bear, and atone for the sins of his people; as also, that it might be manifest that he assumed true and real flesh, and was a partaker of the same flesh and blood with us; and that he was a Son of Abraham, and of his seed, as it was promised he should; and that he was made under the law, and came to fulfil it, and was obliged to it, as every one that is circumcised is; as well as to shew a regard to all divine, positive institutions that are in being, and to set us an example, that we should tread in his steps; and likewise to cut off all excuse from the Jews, that they might not have this to say, that he was an uncircumcised person, and so not a Son of Abraham, nor the Messiah.

His name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb] Luke

i. 31. It appears from hence, and from the instance of John the Baptist, chap. i. 57. that at circumcision it was usual to give names to children; see the note there. The Jews observe (q), that “six persons were called by their names before they were born; and these are Isaac, Ishmael, Moses, Solomon, Josiah, and the king Messiah:” the latter they prove from *Psal. lxxii. 17.* which they render, “Before the sun his name was Yinnon,” or the Son; that is, the Son of God.

22 ¶ And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord;

Of her, the virgin Mary, the mother of our Lord; though most copies read, “of their purification:” and so read the Syriac, Persian, and Ethiopic versions, including both Mary and Jesus: and now, though Mary was not polluted by the conception, bearing, and bringing forth of Jesus, *that holy thing* born of her; yet inasmuch as she was in the account of the law unclean; and though Jesus had no impurity in his nature, yet seeing he was made sin for his people, both came under this law of purification, which was for the sake of the son or daughter, as well as for the mother; though our reading, and which is, according to the Complutensian edition, best agrees with the Hebrew phrase, *ימי טוהרה* the days of her purifying, or purification, in *Lev. xii. 4, 6.*

According to the law of Moses] In *Leviticus xii.*

Were accomplished] Which for a son were forty days: the first seven days of her lying-in she was unclean; and then she continued three and thirty days in the blood of her purifying, which made forty; see *Lev. xii. 2, 4.* but though the time of her purifying was upon the fortieth day, yet it was not till the day following that she came to the temple with her offering: for so runs the Jewish canon (r); “A lying-in woman does not bring her offering on the fortieth day for a male, nor on the eighth day for a female, but after her sun is set; and she brings her offering on the morrow, which is the forty-first, for a male; and the eighty-first, for a female: and this is the day of which it is said, *Lev. xii. 6.* And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son or for a daughter, she shall bring, &c.” And this was the time when

They] Joseph and Mary, brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord. The child Jesus was presented in the temple, to the priest, God’s representative; and which was done in the eastern gate.

(q) P. tke Eliezer, c. 32.

(r) Maimon. Hilch. Mechofre Cappara, c. 2. §. 5.

gate, called the gate of Nicanor : for here, "They made women suspected of adultery to drink, and purified lying-in women, and cleansed the lepers (s)." And here Mary appeared with her first-born son, the true Messiah; and this was the first time of his coming into his temple, as was foretold, *Mal. iii. 1.*

23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)

In *Exod. xiii. 2. Numb. iii. 13. Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord*; that is, devoted and consecrated to him, and so to be redeemed. The reason of this law was this, When God smote all the first-born of Egypt, he saved the first-born of Israel; and therefore claimed a right to them, and obliged their parents, excepting the Levites, to redeem them at the price of five shekels, which were about twelve shillings and six pence of our money, and which was given to the Levites; see *Exod. xiii. 12—15. Numb. iii. 12, 13, 46, 47. and chap. xviii. 15, 16.* And this law our Lord came under, as Mary's first-born, and as one *holy to the Lord*; and such a sum of money was now paid for his redemption, who was the great Redeemer of his people; he being made under the law, and in all things subject to it, that he might redeem them from the bondage, curse, and condemnation of it. Now as the tribe of Levi was excepted from this law, it is a clear case, that Mary, though allied to Elisabeth, was not of the tribe of Levi, otherwise her first-born would not have been subject to it (t). "An Israelite that comes from a priestess, or from a she Levite, is free, (that is, from the redemption of the first-born;) for the thing does not depend on the father, but on the mother, as it is said, *that openeth the womb in Israel.*"

24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons.

That is, when the time of purification came, the parents of our Lord brought him from Bethlehem to Jerusalem, to present him in the temple to the Lord, as his, and to redeem him; and not only so, but to offer the sacrifice required of child-bed women:

According to that which is said in the law of the Lord] *Leviticus xii. 8.*

A pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons] If the person was able, she was to bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt-offering, and a young pi-

geon, or a turtle dove, for a sin-offering; but in case of poverty, then the above sufficed, and one of them was for a burnt-offering, and the other for a sin-offering; which shews not only that the virgin offered for herself a sin-offering, being ceremonially unclean, but also her mean estate and poverty, in that she offered the offering of the poorer sort; see *Lev. xii. 6, 8.*

25 ¶ And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

Not in Nazareth, or Bethlehem, but in Jerusalem, the metropolis of the nation; one that lived there, was an inhabitant of that city, and a person of fame and note. So Joseph ben Jochanan, is called (u), איש ירושלים, "a man of Jerusalem," an inhabitant of that place:

Whose name was Simeon] Not Simeon חזקיה "the just," the last of the men of the great synagogue, of whom the Jews often make mention (x); though this Simeon bears the same character, yet could not be he; because he was not only an high priest, which, if this man had been, would doubtless have been mentioned; but also lived some years before this time. Many have thought that this was Rabban Simeon, the son of Hillel, who was president of the sanhedrim forty years; and in which office this his son succeeded him; and which Simeon was the father of Gamaliel, the master of the apostle Paul, of whom the Jewish chronologer thus writes (y): "Rabban Simeon, the son of Hillel the old, received from his father, and was appointed president after his father; but the time of the beginning of his presidency I do not find in any authors:" and a little after, "Rabban Simeon, the son of Hillel, is the first that is called by the name of Rabban." There are some things which seem to agree with, and favour this thought; for certain it is, that Christ was born in his time, whilst he was living: so the above writer says (z), after he had observed, that "Jesus of Nazareth was born at Bethlehem-Judah, a parsa and a half from Jerusalem, in the year 3761 of the creation, and in the forty-second year of Cæsar Augustus; that, according to this computation, his birth was in the days of Rabban Simeon, the Son of Hillel." And it is worthy of notice also, what another genealogical writer

(u) Pirke Abot, c. 1. §. 4, 5.

(x) Ibid. §. 2. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 69. 1. T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 42. 3. & 43. 3.

(y) Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 1.

(z) Ibid. par. 2. fol. 14. 2.

(s) Misn. Sota, c. 1. §. 5.

(t) Maimon. Hilch. Beccuim, c. 11. §. 10.

writer of theirs says (a), that "Rabban Simeon, the son of old Hillel, the prince, or president of Israel, as his father was, as it is in *Sabbat*, c. i. "is not mentioned in the *Misna*." Which looks as if he was not a favourer of the traditions of the elders, nor in great esteem with the Jews, that they ascribe none of them to him; yea, it may be observed, that he is entirely left out in the account of the succession of the fathers of tradition, in the tract called *Pirke Abot*; which is somewhat extraordinary, when he was the son of one, and the father of another, of so much note among them. One would be tempted to think, that such a neglect of him, should spring from ill will to him, on account of his professing Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah. But there are other things which do not so well accord, as that this Simeon lived some years after the birth of Christ; whereas our Simeon seems to be in the decline of life, and just ready to depart: as also, that he was prince of Israel, or president of the sanhedrim, after this; which it is not likely he should, after such a confession of Jesus being the Messiah: likewise, seeing that his son Gamaliel was brought up a Pharisee: to which last Dr Lightfoot replies, that holy fathers have sometimes wicked children; and that it was thirty years from Simeon's acknowledging Christ, to Gamaliel's education of Paul, or little less; and so much time might wear out the notice of his father's action, if he had taken any notice of it, especially his father dying shortly after he had made so glorious a confession; but his last observation is an objection to him. Upon the whole, it must be left uncertain and undetermined who he was:

And the same man was just and devout] He was a holy, good man in his life and conversation; he was one that feared God, and avoided evil; he was righteous before men, and devout towards God, and exercised a conscience void of offence to both:

Waiting for the consolation of Israel] That is, the Messiah; for this was one of his names with the Jews, who sometimes stile him, מנחם "the comforter": for so they report (b), that "There are some that say his name is *Menachem*, the comforter; as it is said, *Because the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me*, Lam. i. 16." And again (c), it is observed, that "The name of the Messiah is *Menachem*, the comforter; and *Menachem*, by gematry, or numerically, is the same with *Tzemach*, the branch, Zech. iii. 8." And so they often call him by the name of the

consolation: ארואה בנחמה which Dr Lightfoot renders, "so let me see the consolation;" but should be rendered, "may I never see the consolation," was a common form of swearing among them; and used much by R. Simeon ben Shetach, who lived before the times of Christ, of which there are several instances (d): "Says R. Juda ben Tabai, ארואה בנחמה "May I never see the consolation," if I have not slain a false witness.—Says R. Simeon ben Shetach to him, "May I never see the consolation," if thou hast not shed innocent blood." The gloss (e) on it is, "It is a light word, (the form) of an oath, in short language: as if it was said, May I never see the consolations of Zion, if he has not done this." Again (f), "says R. Simeon ben Shetach, בנחמה ארואה "May I never see the consolation," if I did not see one run after his companion, into a desolate place, &c." Now they might easily collect this name of the Messiah from several passages of scripture, which speak of God's comforting his people at the time of redemption by the Messiah; and particularly, from its being part of his work and office, to comfort them that mourn, for which he was anointed by the Spirit of the Lord, Isa. lxi. 1—3. And when he is called here, the consolation of Israel, it is not to be understood of the whole Jewish nation; for he was so far from being a comfort to them, as such, that through their corruption and wickedness, he came, not to send peace, but a sword; and to set at variance the nearest relations and friends among themselves; and through their unbelief and rejection of him, wrath came upon them to the uttermost: but of the true and spiritual Israel of God, whom he has chosen, redeemed, and calls, whether of Jews or Gentiles; his own special and peculiar people, the heirs of promise; and who are often mourners in Zion, and being frequently disconsolate on account of sin, the temptations of Satan, and the hidings of God's face, stand in need of consolation from him: and in him there is what is always matter and ground of consolation; as in his person, he being the mighty God, and so able to save to the uttermost; in his blood, which speaks peace and pardon, and cleanses from all sin; in his righteousness, which is pure and perfect, and justifies from all iniquity; in his sacrifice, which expiates all the transgressions of his people; in his fulness, which is sufficient to supply all their wants; and in his power, by which he is able to keep them from falling, and to present them faultless

(a) Juchasin, fol. 66. 2.

(b) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 98. 2. Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 1.

T. Hierof. Beracot, fol. 5. 1.

(c) Kimchi in Zech. iii. 8.

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(d) T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 16. 2. & Maccot, fol. 5. 2.

(e) Tosaphot in Chagiga ibid.

(f) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 37. 2. & Shebuot, fol. 34. 1. Vid. & Cetubot, fol. 67. 1. & Echa Rabbati, fol. 49. 2.

less before God. And he does often comfort them by his Spirit, by his word, and ordinances, by the promises of his Gospel, by the discoveries of pardoning grace through his blood, and by his gracious presence: nor are his consolations small, but large and abundant, strong, solid, and everlasting. Now for the Messiah under this character, Simeon was waiting, hoping in a little time to see him; since he knew, both by the prophecies of the Old Testament, particularly by Daniel's weeks, and by divine revelation, that the time was just at hand for his coming:

And the Holy Ghost was upon him] Not in a common and ordinary way, as he is upon all that are called by grace, as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification; and as he was upon many others, who at this time were waiting and looking for the Messiah, as well as he; but in an extraordinary way, as a spirit of prophecy: for though prophecy had ceased among the Jews, from the times of Malachi, yet upon the conception and birth of Christ, it now returned; as to Zacharias, Elizabeth, and the virgin Mary, and here to Simeon, as is clear from what follows.

26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

Not in a dream, as the wise men were warned, nor by an angel, as Joseph, nor by a voice from heaven, which the Jews call *Bath Kol*, but by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, enlightening his understanding, and impressing on his mind,

That he should not see death] An Hebraism, see it in *Psalms* lxxxix. 48. the same with the phrase, to *taste death*, elsewhere used; and the sense is, as the Ethiopic version renders it, "that he should not die;" or as the Perfic version, "that his death should not be" as yet: he should live some time longer; nor should that messenger be sent to remove him, though a man in years, out of time into eternity,

Before he had seen the Lord's Christ] With his bodily eyes: for he had seen him with an eye of faith already, and in the promise, as Abraham had; and in the types and sacrifices of the law, as the rest of believers under the Old Testament. The Messiah is called the *Lord's Christ*, referring to *Psalms* ii. 2. because he was anointed by *Jehovah*, the Father, and with *Jehovah*, the Spirit; with the Holy Ghost, the oil of gladness, to be prophet, priest, and king, in the Lord's house. So the Messiah is by the Targumist called, the Messiah of *Jehovah*, or *Jehovah's Messiah*; that is, as here, *the Lord's Christ*: thus in the Targum on *Isaiah* iv. 2. it is said, "In that time, משיחא דיהוה shall be for joy and for glory."

And on *Isaiah* xxviii. 5. the paraphrase is, "At that time, משיחא דיהוה the Messiah of the Lord of hosts, shall be for a crown of joy, and for a diadem of praise to the rest of his people." Compare these paraphrases with what is said of Christ, in *1*. 32.

The glory of thy people Israel] Simeon's language, exactly agrees with the Targumist. The Perfic version adds, "and with this hope he passed his time, or age, and became very old and decrepit."

27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

By the same Spirit of God, that revealed the above to him. The Ethiopic version renders it, "The Spirit brought him into the temple;" but Simeon was not brought thither, as this version seems to suggest, in such manner as Ezekiel was brought by the Spirit to Jerusalem, *Ezek.* viii. 3. or as Christ was brought by Satan to the holy city, and set upon the pinnacle of the temple; but *the Spirit of God, who knows and searches all things, even the deep things of God*, and could testify beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, knew the exact time when Jesus would be brought into the temple; and suggested to Simeon, and moved upon him, and influenced and directed him to go thither at that very time. The Perfic version renders the whole verse thus, "when he heard that they brought Christ into the temple, that they might fulfil the law, Simeon went in;" which version spoils the glory of the text, making Simeon's coming into the temple to be upon a report heard, and not the motion of the holy Ghost.

And when the parents brought in the child Jesus] When Joseph and Mary brought Christ into the temple. The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, "his parents." Mary was his real parent, Joseph is called so, as he is his father, in *1*. 48. because he was supposed, and generally thought to be so, *Luke* iii. 23.

To do for him after the custom of the law] As was used to be done in such a case, according to the appointment of the law: or as the Syriac version renders it, "as is commanded in the law;" namely, to present him to the Lord, and to pay the redemption-money for him.

28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

That same spirit that had revealed unto him that he should not die till he saw the Messiah with his bodily

bodily eyes; and who by a secret impulse had moved him to go to the temple just at this time, made known unto him, that that child which Joseph and Mary then brought into the temple to present to the Lord, was the Messiah; wherefore, in a rapture of joy, he took him out of their arms into his own, embracing him with all affection and respect imaginable: though some think he was a priest, and it being his office to present the first-born to the Lord, he took him in his arms, and did it; but the former account seems more agreeable:

And blessed God] Praised him, and gave glory to him, for his great goodness in sending the promised Messiah, and long-wished for Saviour; for his grace and favour, in indulging him with a sight of him; and for his truth and faithfulness, in making good his promise to him: *and said,*

29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

He acknowledges him as his Lord, and to have a despotic power over him, with respect to life and death; and himself as his servant, which he was both by creation and grace: and though it expresses humiliation, and a sense of distance and unworthiness, yet to be a servant of the most high God, is a very high and honourable character; what he requests of the Lord is, that he might *depart in peace*; signifying his hearty desire to die, and with what cheerfulness he should meet death, having obtained all that he could wish for and desire, in seeing and embracing the Saviour: he expresses his death, by a departure out of the world, as in *John* xiii. 1. *Phil.* i. 21. agreeable to the way of speaking of it among the Jews, see the notes there; and by a word, which signifies a loosing of bonds; death being a dissolving the bond of union, between soul and body, and a deliverance, as from prison and bondage; the body being, as it were, a prison to the soul, in the present state of things: and he also intimates, that whereas, though he had the strongest assurances of the Messiah's coming, and of his coming before his death, by the revelation of the holy Ghost, and so most firmly believed it, without fluctuation, and hesitation of mind; yet, as hope deferred makes the heart sick, he was anxious and restless in his desire till it was accomplished; but now being come, he could take his leave of the world, and his dismissal into eternity, with the greatest calmness and tranquillity of mind, having nothing to disturb him, nor more to desire: he adds,

According to thy word] For he seems to have understood by the revelation made to him, that as he should not die before he saw the Messiah; so when he had seen him, that he should immediately, or in a very short time after, be removed by death;

and which he greatly desired, and in which he sinned not, because his request was according to the word of God: whereas often, desires of death are not only without the word of God, and due resignation to his will, and any regard to his glory, but to be rid of some trouble, or gratify some lust, as pride, revenge, &c.

30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

The Messiah, who is often so called; see *Gen.* xlix. 18. *Isai.* xlix. 6. and chap. lii. 10. He goes by the name of *salvation*, because the salvation of God's elect is put into his hands, and he has undertaken it; and because he is the author of it, he has fulfilled his engagements, and has accomplished what he promised to do; and because salvation is in him, it is to be had in him; and in him, the true Israel of God are saved with an everlasting salvation: and he is called *God's salvation*, because he is a Saviour of his choosing, calling, and constituting; whom he promised under the Old Testament-dispensation, and in the fulness of time sent; and who now appeared in human nature, and whom good old Simeon now saw with his bodily eyes; a sight, which many kings and prophets had desired, but were not favoured with; and also with the eyes of his understanding, with the spiritual eye of faith, as his Saviour and Redeemer; for without this, the former would not have been sufficient to have given such peace and tranquillity of mind, in a departure out of this world: for many saw him in the days of his flesh, who never saw his glory, as the Son of God and Saviour of sinners; but such a sight those have, who have their understandings enlightened, and Christ, as God's salvation, set before them: they see him in the glory of his person, the fulness of his grace, the suitableness and excellency of his righteousness, the efficacy of his blood, and the perfection of his sacrifice; and as an able, willing, compleat, and only Saviour: and such a sight of him, puts them out of conceit with themselves, and their own works of righteousness, as saviours; makes the creature, and all it has and does, look mean and empty; fills the soul with love to Christ, and a high esteem of him, and *with joy unspeakable and full of glory*; it transforms a soul, and makes it like to Christ; gives it inexpressible pleasure and satisfaction; and makes it desirous, as it did this good man, to depart and be with Christ, which is far better, than to live, in this (in some sense) state of absence from him.

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

In his eternal purposes and decrees, having chosen and fore-ordained Christ, and appointed him to be his salvation to the ends of the earth; in his counsel and covenant of grace, wherein it was

agreed, determined, and concluded on, that he should be the Saviour of his people; and in the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament, and in all the types, shadows, and sacrifices of that dispensation; in which he was exhibited, and held forth as the Saviour to the saints and believers of those times; and now had sent him in human nature, to work out that salvation he had chosen and called him to, and he had undertaken:

Before the face of all people] Meaning not the congregation of Israel, that looked for redemption in Jerusalem, and who were now together with Simeon and Anna, when the child Jesus was presented in the temple; nor the body of the Jewish nation only, to whom he was made manifest, had they not wilfully shut their eyes, by John's ministry and baptism; and more so, by the miracles wonders, and signs, which God did by Christ in the midst of them; but both Jews and Gentiles: for as he was provided and sent as a Saviour, and a great one, he was to be lifted up on the cross, as the serpent was lifted up by Moses in the wilderness, to draw all his elect to him, of every nation; and to be set up as an ensign to the people, in the public ministry of the word; to be the object of faith and hope, to look unto, for life and salvation.

32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

Or "for the revelation of the Gentiles;" to reveal the love, grace, and mercy of God, an everlasting righteousness, and the way of life and salvation to them. Reference seems to be had to *Isaiab* xlii. 6. and xlix. 6. *Light*, is one of the names of the Messiah in the Old Testament, as in *Psalms* xliii. 3. *Dan.* ii. 22. which passages are by the Jews (*g*) themselves, interpreted of Christ; and is a name often used of him in the New Testament: it is true of him as God, he is light itself, and in him is no darkness at all; and as the creator of mankind, he is that light which lightens every man with the light of nature and reason; and as the Messiah, he is come a light into the world: the light of the Gospel, in the clear shine of it, is from him; the light of grace in his people, who were in darkness itself, he is the author and donor of; as he is also of the light of glory and happiness in the world to come: and particularly, the Gentiles enjoy this benefit of light by him; who were, and as this supposes they were, in darkness, as they had been some hundreds of years before the Messiah's coming: they were in the dark about the Being and Perfections of God, about the Unity of God, and the Trinity of persons in the

Godhead, and about God in Christ; about his worship, the rule and nature of it; and the manner of atonement, and reconciliation for sin; the person, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; the Spirit of God, and his operations on the souls of men; the scriptures of truth, and both law and Gospel; the resurrection of the dead, and a future state: now, though Christ, in his personal ministry, was sent only to the Jews; yet after his resurrection, he gave his disciples a commission to go into all the world, to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, in order to turn them from darkness to light; and hereby, multitudes were called out of darkness into marvellous light: and this Simeon had knowledge of, and a few more besides him; otherwise, the generality of the Jewish nation were of opinion, that when the Messiah came, the nations of the world would receive no benefit by him, no light, nor comfort, nor peace, nor prosperity; but all the reverse would befall them, as darkness, calamity, and misery: and so they express themselves in a certain place (*b*); "The Israelites look, or wait for redemption; for the day of the Lord shall be light to them;" but the nations, why do they wait for him? for he shall be to them "darkness, and not light." But the contrary, Simeon, under divine inspiration, declares; and blessed be God, it has proved true: he adds,

And the glory of thy people Israel] Which is true of Israel in a literal sense, inasmuch as the Messiah was born of the Jews, and among them; and was first sent and came to them, and lived and dwelled with them; taught in their streets, and wrought his miracles in the midst of them; though this was an aggravation of their ingratitude and unbelief, in rejecting him: the Gospel was first preached to them, even after the commission was enlarged to carry it among the Gentiles; and many of them were converted, and the first Gospel-church was planted among them; and an additional glory was made to them, by the calling of the Gentiles, and joining them to them, through the ministry of the apostles, who were all Jews; who went forth from Zion, and carried the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, to the several parts of the world: and this also is more especially true of the mystical, or spiritual Israel of God, whose glory Christ is; being made of God unto them, *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*; they having such an head, husband, saviour, and redeemer, as he; and they being clothed with his righteousness, and washed in his blood, sanctified by his grace, and made meet for eternal glory; to which they have a right and claim, through the grace of God, and merits

(g) Jarchi in *Psal.* xliii. 3. Bereshit Rabba, fol. 1. 3. Echa Rabba, fol. 50. 2.

(b) Gloss. in T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 98. 2.

merits of Christ; and therefore glory not in themselves, but in Christ, who is their all in all.

33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

The Vulgate Latin reads, "and his father and mother." The Ethiopic version retains both his name and his relation, and reads, "and Joseph his father, and his mother;" but all the ancient copies read, only Joseph, without the addition, *his father*; and so the Syriac, Arabic, and Persian versions: they

Marvelled at those things which were spoken of him] The child Jesus: not that those things which Simeon said, were new and strange to them; for they not only knew that the same things were predicted of the Messiah, but they had heard and known, and believed the same concerning this child; but they wondered, that a stranger to them and the child, coming into the temple at this instant, should have such a revelation made to him, and be able to say the things he did. Moreover, there is no need to confine this passage to what were said by Simeon, but it may reach to, and include every thing, that as yet had been spoken concerning Jesus; either before, or since his birth; as by the angel to them both, to the one before his conception, to the other after; and by Zacharias and Elisabeth, and by the angel to the shepherds, who had reported the same to Joseph and Mary, and now by Simeon; and they were astonished at the exact agreement there was between them.

34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this *child* is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;

Pronounced them blessed persons, on account of their relation to Christ, as man; and more especially, because of their interest in him, as the Saviour and Redeemer of them; and wished them all happiness and prosperity inward and outward, temporal, spiritual, and eternal; and so the Arabic version renders it, confining it to Joseph and Mary: "and Simeon blessed them both;" though this blessing of his may take in also the young child Jesus, whom he might pronounce blessed, as Elisabeth before had done, chapter i. 42. since he was the promised seed, in whom all nations of the earth should be blessed; and to whom, and to whose undertakings, interest, and kingdom, he might wish all prosperous success. The Persian version reads, "old Simeon:"

And said unto Mary his mother] He directed his discourse to her, because she was the only real parent of this child he had in his arms, and had said so

much of, and was about to say more; and because part of what follows, personally concerned her:

Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel] The word *child*, is not in the original text; where it is only, *this is set*, &c. Simeon seeming to be, as it were, at a loss, what name to call this great and illustrious person by, and therefore it is left to be supplied. The Persian version supplies it thus, "behold, this holy One" "is set," &c. The sense is, that this child, who is the stone of Israel, is set, or put, or lies, both as a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence, for many of the Jews to stumble at, and fall and perish; and as a precious corner and foundation-stone, for the erection and elevation of others of them to the highest honour and dignity, that shall believe on him: for these words are not to be understood of the same, but of different persons among the Jews; though it may be true, that some, who first stumbled at him, might be raised up again, and brought to believe in him; and that many, who for his sake and the Gospel's, fell under great disgrace and reproach, and into great afflictions and persecutions, were raised up to the enjoyment of great comfort and honour: but they are not the same persons that Christ is set for the fall of, that he is set for the rising of; nor the same he is set for the rising of, he is set for the fall of; the one design the elect of God among the Jews, who became true believers in Christ; and the other, the reprobate, who died in impenitence and unbelief: the words, so far as they concern Christ, being *set for the fall of many* of the Jews, have a manifest reference to *Isaiah viii. 14, 15.* where the Messiah is spoken of as a stone, and as *a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence*; at which, many of the Jews should stumble, and fall, and be broken. And so the text is applied in the Talmud (i), where it is said, that "The Son of David will not come, until both houses of the fathers fall out of Israel; and they are these, the head of the captivity in Babylon, and the prince in the land of Israel; as it is said, *Isa. viii. 14. And he shall be for a sanctuary, but for a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence, to both the houses of Israel.*" Accordingly the Jews did stumble at his birth, parentage, and education; at the meanness of his person, and the obscurity of his kingdom; at the company he kept, and the audience that attended him; at his doctrine and miracles, and at his sufferings and death: they fell, through their unbelief and rejection of him, as the Messiah; and not only from their outward privileges, civil, and religious; the Gospel was taken away from them, the national covenant between

God

(i) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 38. 1.

God and them was broken, and they ceased to be his people; their temple and city were destroyed, and wrath came upon their nation to the uttermost; but they also fell into everlasting perdition, dying in their sins, through their disbelief of Jesus as the Messiah: this indeed was not the case of all of them; there was a seed, a remnant, according to the election of grace; but it was the case of many, and of the far greater part: but then this same stone that was laid in Zion, was also *set for the rising again of many* of them; meaning not for their resurrection in a literal sense, though this is a truth: for as all God's elect, whether Jews or Gentiles, rose in him representatively, when he rose from the dead; so many of them rose personally after his resurrection, and all of them at the last day, will rise again, in consequence of their union to him; and indeed, all the wicked will be raised again, by virtue of his power: but not this, but their resurrection in a spiritual sense, is here meant; and it supposes the persons raised, to have been in a low estate, as all God's elect by nature are: they are in a hopeless and helpless condition in themselves; they are in a state of thralldom and bondage, to sin, Satan, and the law; they are filled with diseases, nauseous, mortal, and incurable; they are clothed in rags, and are beggars on the dunghil; they are deep in debt, and have nothing to pay; and are dead in trespasses and sins. Christ is now provided and appointed, for the raising them up out of their low estate, and he does do it; he is *the resurrection and the life* unto them; he raises from the death of sin, to a life of grace and holiness; from sin, to a life of faith on him, and communion with him here, and to eternal life hereafter: he pays all their debts, clothes them with his righteousness, heals all their diseases, redeems them from the slavery of sin, the captivity of Satan, and the bondage and curse of the law; brings them into a hopeful and comfortable condition; raises them to the possession of a large estate, an eternal inheritance; and gives them both a right unto it, and meetness for it: sets them among princes, makes them kings, places them on a throne of glory, yea on his own throne, and sets a crown of righteousness, life, and glory, on their heads; and will cause them to reign with him, first on earth for a thousand years, and then in heaven to all eternity: and this was to be the case of many in Israel, though not of all; for all did not obey the Gospel, some did, three thousand under one sermon; and more will in the latter day, when all Israel shall be saved. This privilege of rising again, in this sense, by Christ, though it is here spoken of with respect to many of the Jews, yet not to the exclusion of the Gentiles; for this honour have all the saints, be they

of what nation they will. Now when Christ is said to be *set* for these different things, the meaning is; that he was foreappointed, preordained, and set forth in God's counsel, purposes, and decrees, as a stone at which some should stumble, through their own wickedness and unbelief, and fall and perish, and be eternally lost; and as a foundation-stone for others, to build their faith and hope upon, which should be given them, and so rise up to everlasting life; and that he was set forth in the prophecies of the Old Testament, as in that here referred to, for the same ends; and that he was now exhibited in human nature with the same views, and should be held forth in the everlasting Gospel for the like purposes; and which eventually is *the savour of life unto life* to some, and *the savour of death unto death* to others: to all this a *behold* is prefixed, as expressing what is wonderful and surprising, and not to be accounted for, but to be resolved into the secret and sovereign will of God: it is added, that he is also set

For a sign which shall be spoken against] Referring to *Isai. viii. 18.* Christ is the sign of God's everlasting love to his people, the great proof, evidence and demonstration of it; and in this respect, is spoken against by many: and he is set up in the gospel, as an ensign of the people, to look at, and gather to, for comfort, peace, righteousness, salvation, and eternal life; but is by many contradicted, opposed, and treated with contempt and abhorrence; so that he appears rather to be set as a mark and butt to shoot at: he was spoken against by the scribes and Pharisees, and the greater part of the people of the Jews, and contradicted, as the Messiah, because of his mean appearance among them; his proper Deity was denied, his divine sonship was gainfayed; he was contemned in all his offices, kingly, priestly, and prophetic; his works of mercy, both to the bodies and souls of men, his miracles, and the whole series of his life and actions, were traduced as sinful and criminal: this was the contradiction of sinners against himself, which he endured, *Heb. xii. 3.* and for which he was set and appointed; and still the contradiction continues, and will, as long as the gospel is preached.

35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

Meaning either the sword, "or spear of scandal," as the Arabic version renders it; so the calumny, and reproach of the tongues of men, is compared to a sharp sword, *Psal. lvii. 4.* and such the virgin might meet with on account of her conception in an unmarried state, which might greatly wound her

her soul: or else the sorrows she met with, on account of her son; as he was a man of sorrows, so was she a woman of sorrows, from his cradle to his cross; and his sorrows, like so many darts, or javelins, rebounded from him to her, and pierced her soul through; as when Herod sought his life, *Matt. ii. 13, 14.* when she had lost him for three days, *Luke ii. 48.* and when he was frequently exposed to danger among the spiteful and malicious Jews; but never more than when she stood at his cross, and saw him in his agonies, extended on the tree, bleeding, gasping, and dying, *John xix. 25.* Some think this refers to martyrdom, which she was to suffer by the sword, of which the scripture is silent. Epiphanius, an ancient writer, seems to hint at it (i).

That the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed] That is, all this offence was to be taken at Christ, and he to be spoken against; and all these afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions, he and his were to endure for this end; that the secret thoughts of men might be discovered, and they be known to be what they were, whether hypocrites or good men, foes or friends of Christ: so on the one hand, what were the scribes and Pharisees, who talked of a Messiah, and pretended to righteousness and holiness, and yet when the Messiah came, rejected him; and so all such who followed Christ with worldly views, and expected a temporal kingdom, but left him when they found it otherwise; and Judas, one of his disciples: and, on the other hand, who were sincere and hearty, as the rest of his disciples, Joseph of Arimathea, and others, who abode by him, notwithstanding the cross; and the same use have all persecutions, errors, and heresies, the opposition and contradiction of men in every shape now, and the same end is answered; wicked men, and hypocrites, are known to be what they are; and good men are made manifest; and what each think of Christ and his Gospel is discovered hereby; see *1 Cor. xi. 19.*

36 ¶ And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;

The name is the same with *Hannah*: so *Hannah* the mother of *Samuel*, is by the Septuagint called *Anna*, in *1 Sam. i. 2, 5, 8, 9, 15, 19, 22, 25.* and it signifies *grace*, or *gracious*; and as was her name, so was she, a gracious woman; one that had the grace of God herself, and was a publisher of the glad tidings of grace and redemption by Christ, to others; and she was

A prophetess] For though prophecy had ceased among the Jews for some hundreds of years, it now revived upon the coming of the Messiah; and though instances of women-prophets were rare, yet some there were, both before and after the coming of Christ; as *Miriam*, the sister of *Moses* and *Aaron*; *Deborah*, the wife of *Lapidoth*, and *Huldah*, the wife of *Shallum*; and this *Anna*, at the time of Christ's birth; and afterwards four daughters of *Philip* the Evangelist, who were virgins. This woman was

The daughter of Phanuel] It is the same name with *Penuel*; and which, by the Septuagint, in *1 Chron. iv. 4.* and *viii. 25.* is called *Phanuel*, as here. This man might be a person of some note, or he may be mentioned for the sake of his name, which signifies *the face of God*, and is the name Jacob gave to a certain place where he had seen God face to face, *Gen. xxxii. 30, 31.* And now *Phanuel's* daughter both saw and gave the light of the knowledge of God, in the face of *Jesus Christ*, and now beheld his face in the flesh, who is God over all, blessed for ever.

Of the tribe of Aser] The same with *Asher*; for so *Asher* is called, as here, by the Septuagint, in *Gen. xxx. 13.* and chap. *xlix. 20.* and elsewhere: and though this tribe was carried captive with the rest of the ten tribes; yet there were some of the ten tribes that returned along with *Judah* and *Benjamin*, and were dispersed among them. This tribe had its seat in *Galilee*; so that though the Jews denied that any prophet came from thence, yet it seems a prophetess did.

She was of a great age] The phrase is the same with that in chapter *i. 7.* there rendered, *stricken in years*; see the note there. Her age will appear to be great, if it be observed, that she was seven years a married woman, and fourscore and four years a widow, which make ninety-one; and if she was married at twelve years and a half, at which time the Jews (k) reckoned females marriageable, she must be an hundred and three years old; and perhaps her age might be eight or ten years more:

And had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity] This is mentioned to observe her chastity, that she was in her virginity, or a chaste virgin, when she became a wife; such an one as the high priest was obliged to have, *Lev. xxi. 13.* and that the tokens of her virginity were brought, which the Jewish laws obliged to, *Deut. xxii. 15, 17, 20.* and that she lived honestly and honourably with her husband, during the term of her marriage-state.

37 And

(i) Contr. Hæres. hæres. 78.

(k) Maimon. Hilchat. Issot, c. 2. §. 2.

37 And she *was* a widow of about four-score and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

Which years are not the date of her whole age, as some have thought, but of her widowhood-state, as distinct from her marriage-state, and the time of her virginity. And this sense all the versions favour.

Which departed not from the temple] That is, she was constant in her devotion there at the time of divine service, whether by night or day; not that she was in it, for she had been out of it now; otherwise it could not, with propriety, be said of her, that *she coming in that instant*, as in the next verse; but that she always was there when there was any worship performed in which women might be concerned, and which is pointed out in the next clause:

But served God with fastings and prayers night and day] She attended to the usual fasts of twice a week, and to such as were enjoined the whole congregation, and to the several set times of prayer, and to every act of devotion, private or public, by night or day. In *Exodus xxxviii. 8.* we read of women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: both the Targums of Onkelos and Ben Uzziel, render it, "who came to pray;" and the Septuagint version, "that fasted:" Anna did both.

38 And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

That instant the parents of Christ brought him into the temple; just as Simeon was embracing him in his arms, and blessing God for him, and saying the things concerning him he had done; and who also came at that juncture, as he did, under the impulse, and by the direction of the Spirit of God;

Gave thanks likewise unto the Lord] Praised him, as he had done, that he had sent the promised, and long-looked-for Messiah and Saviour; and that she had lived to see his blessed face, and this happy day; and that she should be directed to come in at this instant, and be favoured with this singular mercy of seeing the new-born Saviour, and his honoured parents:

And spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem] This she either did at this time; they in Jerusalem that looked, and diligently waited for, and earnestly desired the Messiah, and spiritual redemption and salvation by him, being now assembled together in the temple; or after-

wards, as she had opportunity of conversing with them, when she acquainted them with what she had heard and seen. By *the redemption* they were looking for, is meant, the Redeemer; as by salvation, the Saviour, in *1. 30.* Some versions, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic, read, "the redemption of Jerusalem;" not literally, but spiritually understood, even the redemption of the church of Christ, which is often so called: and others, as the Persian version, "the redemption of Israel;" that is, of spiritual Israel: some read *in Israel*; so one copy of Stephens's.

39 ¶ And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth.

Relating to the purification of Mary, and the presentation and redemption of her first-born, and the sacrifices and ceremonies belonging thereunto:

According to the law of the Lord] Which that directed to, and enjoined:

They returned into Galilee] Not that they came from thence to Jerusalem, but from Bethlehem, where Mary lay in, and her time for purification was now just expired: nor did they go now directly to Galilee; or, if they did, they soon came back again to Bethlehem, since here the wise men found them two years after; when, by a divine warning, they went into Egypt, where they remained till Herod's death, and after came into the land of Israel, into the parts of Galilee, and dwelt at Nazareth; for which reason it is here called their own city;

To their own city, Nazareth] Bethlehem was their native city, the place of their birth, at least of their family; and Nazareth was the city of their habitation.

40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

Grew in body, in strength, and in stature; which shews that it was a true body Christ assumed, and like ours, which did not come to its maturity at once, but by degrees:

And waxed strong in spirit] Or in his soul; for as he had a true body, he had also a reasonable soul, the faculties of which were far from being weak, they were exceeding strong, and appeared stronger and stronger every day; his understanding was clear, his judgment solid, and his memory strong and retentive; his will, and the desires of it, were to that which is good; and his affections cleaving unto it. The Persian and Ethiopic versions read, "was strengthened in, or by the Holy Spirit;" with

with the grace and gifts of it; but the former sense is best.

Filled with wisdom] And knowledge, as man, for this is to be understood, not of his essential wisdom, as God, nor of those treasures of wisdom and knowledge, which were hid in him as mediator, to be dispensed to his church; but of his created and natural wisdom, as man; in which he increased gradually as his body grew, and the faculties of his soul opened under the influences of his Deity, and the power of his Spirit:

And the grace of God was upon him] Which designs not the fulness of grace that was in him, as mediator, for the supply of his people; but either that internal grace which was bestowed on his human nature, even the various graces of the Spirit of God, and which flowed from the grace of union of the two natures in him; or rather, the love and favour of God, which in various instances was in a very singular manner manifested to him.

41 ¶ Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.

Joseph was obliged to go three times a year, as were all the males in Israel, at the feasts of the passover, pentecost, and tabernacles, *Deut. xvi. 16*. The first of these is expressed here,

At the feast of the passover] But the women were not obliged to go up: for so it is said by the Jews (*l*), פסחן של נשים רשותי "the passover of women" is arbitrary, or in their own power; they might go up to the feast, or not, as they pleased. It is indeed said of Hillell, who was now alive, that he obliged the women to the first, but not to a second passover: to which the Karaites object; the account they give, is as follows (*m*); "Truly the women were obliged, by the school of Hillell, to the offering of the passover; but if they were hindered from the first passover, the second was in their power; that is, the thing depended upon their will and pleasure, whether they would offer or no, which may be justly wondered at; for why should they be obliged to the first, and not the second? For behold, as to the obligation of the passover, there is no difference between the first passover, and the second. The sum of the matter is, our wise men, on whom be peace, have determined, and say, that there is no obligation but to males who are arrived to maturity." So that this was a voluntary thing in Mary; which discovers her piety and religion, and her great regard to the ordinances and appointments of God.

42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

Not that he was now, בן כ"ט "a son of the commandment (*n*)," to use the Jewish phrase; or now came under the yoke of the law; or was obliged to the duties of adult church-membership, as is asserted by some; not particularly to go to Jerusalem to make his appearance at the feast of the passover, or any other feast: for, according to the maxims of the Jews, persons were not obliged to the duties of the law, or subject to the penalties of it in case of non-performance, until they were, a female, at the age of twelve years and one day, and a male at the age of thirteen years and one day; but then they used to train up their children, and inure them to religious exercises before: as for instance, though they were not obliged to fast on the day of atonement, until they were at the age before-mentioned; yet they used them to it two or three years before, as they were able to endure it: a son of nine, or ten years old they train him up by hours; they make him fast so many hours; and one of eleven or twelve years old, they make him fast a whole day: but then this was not law, but custom; and which they observed, that they might be used to the commandments (*o*), and be expert in them, and ready to perform them, when required. It is said (*p*), "That there was a good custom in Jerusalem to make their little sons and daughters fast on a fast-day; the son of a year, till the very day he is twelve years old, when he fasts the whole day—and they did not use to leave their little children behind them, but brought them to the synagogues, ליהודים במעון כ"י "that they might be ready in the commandments." That they might be inured to them, and expert in them, when they were under obligation to them; for they were not properly under the law, until they were arrived to the age above-mentioned; nor were they reckoned adult church-members till then, nor then neither, unless worthy persons: for so it is said (*q*), "He that is worthy, at thirteen years of age, is called בן ל"י "a son of the congregation of Israel;" that is, a member of the church. When therefore Joseph and Mary took Jesus along with them, at this age, when

They went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast] Of the passover, it shews their religious regard to him; and may be an instruction to parents

(*l*) T. Hierof. Kiddushin, fol. 61. 3.

(*m*) Eliahu Adderet, p. 39. apud Trigland. de Sect. Karaorum, p. 28.

(*n*) Aben Ezra in Gen. xvii. 14.

(*o*) Mifn. Yoma, c. 8. §. 4. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ibid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 82. 1. Maimon. Hileh. Shebitat. Afur, c. 2. §. 10, 11.

(*p*) Massechet Sopherim, c. 18. §. 5.

(*q*) Zohar in Exod, fol. 39. 4.

rents to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, after their example.

43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.

Fulfilled the seven days of the feast of unleavened bread, for so many days that feast was observed; and though it was not absolutely necessary, and obligatory upon them to stay all that time at Jerusalem, yet Mary and Joseph seem so to have done, as did the more religious and devout persons:

As they returned] At the time when they were going from Jerusalem home again:

The child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem] Being desirous of hearing the discourses of the doctors about the sense of the scriptures, the meaning of the laws, and the traditions of the elders, and of conversing with them:

And Joseph and his mother knew not of it] Of his intention to tarry longer, nor of his design in so doing: he did not ask leave of them, since his stay was about an affair of his heavenly Father's; and therefore this action of Christ is not to be drawn into an example, or precedent for children, to act without consulting, or asking leave of their parents. They had no notion at all of his staying behind them, nor any suspicion of it; nor did they miss him for a considerable time; which might be owing to the large numbers that went in company together, so that they could not tell but that he was in the croud, though they did not see him; or to the men and women travelling in separate companies, as is thought; so that Joseph might think he was with Mary, and Mary might conclude he was with Joseph, till they came to the end of their first day's journey, when they came together, and then missed him.

44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.

That travelled together into the same parts, having been, as they, at Jerusalem to keep the feast:

Went a day's journey] Either before they missed him; or if they missed him sooner, yet they went on inquiring for him in the company, until they were come a day's journey before they thought, or, at least, determined on going back to Jerusalem. The bounds of a day's journey from Jerusalem are said to be (r) *Elath* on the south, and

Akrabba on the north; elsewhere (s) it is, *Elath* on the north, and *Akrabba* on the south, *Lud*, or *Lydda*, on the west, and *Jordan* on the east; wherefore, as Galilee lay north of Jerusalem, the bound of this day's journey must be, according to the *Misna*, *Akrabba*, and, according to the *Talmud*, *Elath*. Nazareth was three days journey from Jerusalem (t): according to the Jewish writers (u), a day's journey was ten *paras*'s, or large miles, which were forty lesser miles; and which, they say, is a middling man's walk on a middling day, as in the months of *Tisri*, or *Nisan*, when days and nights were alike: and it was in the latter of those months, on the twenty-second day of it, that Joseph and Mary set out on their journey; see *Exodus* xii. 18. but it cannot be thought that women and children should be able to travel so many miles a day, and therefore this day's journey, very likely, was shorter:

And they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance] When they came to the end of their day's journey, where they took up their lodging for that night: and as the company was large, they doubtless lay at different houses; wherefore they inquired in every house, where their relations and acquaintance lay, after their child Jesus, where they might most reasonably expect he would be: and so, in a spiritual sense, when souls have lost sight of Christ, of whom should they inquire concerning him? and where should they expect to hear of him, but among their spiritual kindred and friends, and who also are related to Christ? see *Cant.* v. 9.

45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

Not in the company that came from Jerusalem with them, nor among any of their relations and friends, with whom they supposed he was:

They turned back again to Jerusalem] That is, the next morning, for it can hardly be thought they would set out that night, after they had travelled all day, without taking some repose:

Seeking him] At Jerusalem, in the streets and broad places of it: a figure of the church and ordinances, where souls look for, and inquire after their Beloved, when they have lost him, *Cant.* iii. 1-3.

46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

Three

(s) T. Bab. Betza, fol. 5. 1.

(t) David de Pomis Lex.

Heb. p. 141.

(u) T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 2. 3.

T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 93. 2. & 94. 1. & Tosaphota in ibid. fol. 11.

2. Seder Tephillot, fol. 144. 1. Ed. Basil.

(r) Misn. Maaser Shenj, c. 3. §. 2.

Three days from their first setting out from Jerusalem, when Jesus tarried behind; or on the third day, which may be reckoned thus; the first day was spent in journeying, and the second in coming back the same journey, and the third day they sought all Jerusalem for him, when

They found him in the temple] His Father's house, the house of God; a figure of a Gospel-church, where the word and ordinances are duly administered, and where Christ is to be found. What part of the temple Christ was in, is not easy to say; it was not in the holy of holies, for none but the high priest went into that, and that only on the day of atonement; nor in the court of the priests, for he was not among them, but the doctors; nor in the court of the Israelites, where the common people worshipped: it may be best judged of, by observing where their several consistories, or courts of judicature were (*x*); the grand sanhedrim sat in the sanctuary, in the room Gazith; the lesser sanhedrim, which consisted of twenty-three persons, and the bench of three; the one sat in the gate of the court (of the Israelites); and the other in the gate of the mountain of the house (or court of the Gentiles): it seems most likely, that he was in the room Gazith, where the grand sanhedrim sat; for here was the largest number of doctors; and it was the more amazing to his parents to find him here; unless it should be rather thought, that he was in the synagogue in the temple, for such an one there (*y*) was there; where, after service was over, he might be admitted to a conversation with the learned doctors that belonged to it: it follows,

Sitting in the midst of the doctors] The principal doctors in being at this time, were Hillel and Shammai, the one the president, and the other vice-president of the council; and Rabban Simeon, the son of Hillel, who succeeded him in his office; and R. Judah, and R. Joshua, the sons of Bethira; Jonathan ben Uzziel, the author of the Chaldee paraphrase; and R. Jochanan ben Zaccai. The sanhedrim sat in a semicircular form, like the half of a round corn-floor; so that they could see one another, and the prince, and the father of the court, could see them all; and before them sat three rows of the disciples of the wise men; or scholars; and in each row there were three and twenty men: the first row was next to the sanhedrim, and the second row below that, and the third row below that; and in every row they sat according to their superiority in wisdom (*z*): on a seat, in one of these rows, I think, Christ sat

among the scholars; and this may be called *sitting among the doctors*, because these seats were just before them, and were in a semicircular form; at least he might be here at first; when upon the questions he put, and the answers he made, he was taken particular notice of by the doctors, who might call him up, and place him between them; for this, in some cases, was done to scholars. Thus, it is said (*a*), "If one of the disciples, or scholars, say, I have something to say in favour of him, (one that is on his trial) they bring him up, and cause him to sit in the midst of them; and he does not go down from thence all the whole day."

Both hearing them] Their debates and decisions about points in the law of Moses;

And asking them questions] Upon those points. Had this been a *Midrash*, or school, there would be no difficulty of producing instances of putting questions to the doctors there; but there was no such place in the temple, or synagogue, where teachers were interrogated by their hearers; for which reason I think the passages, produced by Dr Lightfoot, are not so pertinent, since they refer to such a place: it is very likely, since there were such a number of scholars admitted to sit before the sanhedrim to hear their controversies and determinations, and were allowed, in some cases, to speak; so they might be suffered to put questions, in order to gain knowledge.

47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers,

All in the sanhedrim, both the doctors, and their disciples, were amazed,

At his understanding] In the knowledge of the law, and of the scriptures:

And his answers] Which he returned to the questions the doctors put to him, which were made with so much wisdom and judgment, that it was surprising in one of his years.

48 And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

That is, when Joseph and Mary saw him amidst the doctors, they were astonished that he was admitted among them, and had in such esteem by them:

And his mother said unto him] She being his own, and only parent, and not Joseph; and therefore he said nothing, but left it to her; who upon sight of him, at least as soon as she had a proper opportunity

(*x*) *Misn. Sanhedrim*, c. 10. §. 2. *Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrim*, c. 1. §. 3. (*y*) *Jarchi in Misn. Yoma*, c. 7. §. 1.

(*z*) *Misn. Sanhedrim*, c. 4. §. 3, 4. *Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrim*, c. 1. §. 7.

(*a*) *Misn. Sanhedrim*, c. 3. §. 4. (*a*)

tunity after he had left the doctors, began to chide, or rather to expostulate with him after this manner:

Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Which was said with great tenderness of affection, and in much mildness; and may be a pattern to parents, who should not provoke their children to anger, but deal gently and tenderly with them:

Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing With great grief, anxiety, and solicitude, fearing lest some evil had befallen him. Mary calls Joseph his father, though she knew he was not, in a proper sense; but because he was supposed to be so, and was his father by the law of marriage; and especially, she might call him so because of his paternal care of him in his education, and bringing him up: for it is a maxim with the Jews (b), that "Not he that begets, but he that brings up, is the Father."

49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

That is, with so much uneasiness and distress of mind, not trusting in the power and providence of God, to take care of him; and in other places, besides the temple, where they had been inquiring for him:

Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? Or "in my Father's house," as the Syriac and Persic versions render it; where, as soon as you missed me, you might, at once, have concluded I was, and not have put yourselves to so much trouble and pains in seeking for me. Christ seems to tax them with ignorance, or, at least, forgetfulness of his having a Father in heaven, whose business he came to do on earth; and which they should have thought in their own minds he was now about, and so have made themselves easy. The business that Christ came about was to preach the Gospel, and which he afterwards performed with great clearness and fulness, with much power, majesty, and authority, with great constancy and diligence, with much concern for the souls of men, and with great awfulness; and in which he took great delight, though he went through many dangers and risks of life; as also to work miracles in proof of his Deity and Messiahship, and for the good of the bodies of men; and in which he was very assiduous, going about every where doing good this way: but the main, and principal part of his business was, to work out salvation for his people, by fulfilling the law, making reconciliation and atonement for their sins, and obtaining eternal redemption: this was a business, which neither angels nor men could do; was very toilsome and la-

borious, and yet he delighted in it; nor did he desist from it until it was accomplished: and this is called his Father's business, because he contrived and assigned it to him; he called him to it, and sent him to perform it; he enjoined it him as man and mediator, and the glory of his perfections was concerned in it, and secured by it: and it was a business that Christ must be about, be concerned in, and perform, because he engaged to do it from all eternity; and because it was the will of his Father, which must be done, and was necessary in order to shew himself dutiful and obedient; and because it was foretold in prophecy again and again, and promised that it should be done; and because it could not be done by another. Now our Lord's conversing with the doctors, and which was a branch of his prophetic office, and was, no doubt, with a view to the good of the souls of men, and nothing less than miraculous, was a shew, a prelude of, and a sort of an entrance upon the business he came about.

50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

What he meant by his Father's house, or his Father's business, and the necessity of his being there, and about that:

Which he spake unto them At that time, and as above related.

51 ¶ And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

Went down from the temple, and from Jerusalem, which were on high ground:

And came to Nazareth Where he and his parents had lived ever since their return from Egypt:

And was subject unto them For though he thought fit to let them know, or, at least, put them in mind, that he had a Father in heaven, whose business he came about, and must do, and therefore did not judge it necessary to ask their leave to stay at Jerusalem on that account; yet, as man, and willing to set an example of filial subjection to parents, he went along with them, and shewed all dutiful respect unto them, yielding a ready and cheerful obedience to their commands, living with them, and working under them, and for them; and so he continued till he was about thirty years of age:

But his mother kept all these sayings Or things; for this relates not only to the words of Christ, but to the whole history of his staying behind them at Jerusalem, of his sitting among the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions, to the astonishment

(b) Shemot Rabba, §. 46. fol. 143. 1.

nishment of all. These things she treasured up, and preserved,

In her heart] That is, in her memory; so the word is used in Jewish writings. It is reported of R. Meir (c), that "He went to intercalate the year in Asia, and there was no *Megilla* (the book of Esther) there, and he wrote it, מלכו "out of his heart," (that is, out of his memory) "and read it."

52: And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

As man; for neither his divine wisdom, nor the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in him, as mediator, could admit of any increase; but as he grew in body, the faculties of his soul opened, and received gradually large measures of wisdom and knowledge, in things natural and spiritual, through the indwelling of his divine nature in him, and the holy Spirit that was without measure on him:

And stature] The word signifies age also; and so the Vulgate Latin has rendered it: but that is not the meaning of it here, since it would have been intirely unnecessary to have observed that he increased in age, which must be unavoidable: but the sense is, that as he increased in the wisdom and knowledge of his human soul, so he likewise increased in the stature of his body;

And in favour with God and man] He appeared by the grace that was in him, and the gifts bestowed on him, to be high in the love and favour of God; and had a large share in the esteem and affections of all good men, who had the honour and happiness of knowing him, and of being acquainted with him.

C H A P. III.

The time of John's entering on his office, §. 1, 2. A short account of John's preaching, §. 3—6. He exhorteth the Pharisees to repent, and be baptized, §. 9. Several questions are proposed to him, which he answereth, §. 10—14. He testifieth of Christ, §. 15. is imprisoned by Herod, §. 19, 20. Jesus baptized by John, to whom the heavens are opened, §. 21, 22. Christ's age, §. 23. and genealogy rehearsed, up to Adam, §. 24—38.

NOW in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lyfaniás the tetrarch of Abilene,

Tiberius was emperor of Rome, and the third of the Cæsars; Julius was the first, and Augustus the second, in whose time Christ was born, and this Tiberius the third; he was the son of Livia, the wife of Augustus, but not by him; but was adopted by him, into the Empire: his name was *Claudius Tiberius Nero*, and for his intemperance was called, *Caldius Biberius Nero*; the whole of his reign was upwards of twenty-two years, for he died in the twenty-third year of his reign (a); and in the fifteenth of it John began to preach, Christ was baptized, and began to preach also; so that this year may be truly called, *the acceptable year of the Lord*.

Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea] Under the emperor Tiberius, in whose reign the Jewish chronologer (b), places him, and the historian (c) also, and make mention of Pilate as sent by Tiberius to Jerusalem: he was not the first governor of Judea for the Romans; there were before him Coponius, Marcus Ambivius, Annius Rufus, and Valerius Gratus:

And Herod being tetrarch of Galilee] This was Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the great, and brother of Archelaus; the above chronologer (d) calls him also a tetrarch, and places him under Tiberius Cesar: he is sometimes called a king, and so he is by the Ethiopic version here called, "King of Galilee;" and in the Arabic version, "Prince over the fourth part of Galilee;" besides Galilee, he had also Peræa, or the country beyond Jordan, as Josephus (e) says, and which seems here to be included in Galilee; see the note on *Matt. xiv. i.*

And his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea, and of the region of Trachonitis] Pliny (f) makes mention of the nation of the Itureans, as belonging to Coele Syria; perhaps Iturea is the same with Batanea, or Auranitis, or both; since these with Trachon, the same with *Trachonitis* here, are allotted to Philip by Josephus (g): it seems to take its name from *Jetur*, one of the sons of Ishmael, *Gen. xxv. 15.* Trachonitis, is mentioned by Pliny (h); as near to Decapolis, and as a region and tetrarchy, as here: Ptolomy (i), speaks of the Trachonite Arabians, on the east of Batanea, or Bashan: the region of Trachona, or Trachonitis, with the Targumists (k), answers to the country of Argob. This Philip, who, as before by

(a) Sueton. Octav. Aug. c. 62, 63. & Tiberius Nero, c. 21, 42, 73.

(b) R. David Ganz, par. 2. fol. 15. 1.

(c) Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 9. §. 2, 3. (d) Par. 1. fol. 25. 2.

(e) De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 6. §. 5.

(f) Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 23.

(g) Ibid. ut supra.

(h) Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 18.

(i) Liber 5. c. 15.

(k) Targum. Jon. in Deut. iii. 4, 14. 1 Kings iv. 13. & T. Hieros. in Deut. iii. 14. & Numb. xxxiv. 15.

(c) T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 18. 2.

by Josephus, so by Egesippus (*l*), is said, in agreement with Luke, to be tetrarch of Trachonitis, was brother to Herod Antipas by the father's, but not by the mother's side. Philip was born of Cleopatra of Jerusalem, and Herod of Malthace, a Samaritan (*m*): he died in the twentieth year of Tiberius (*n*), five years after this:

And *Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene*] Mention is made of *Abila* by Pliny (*o*), as in Coele Syria, from whence this tetrarchy might have its name; and by Ptolomy (*p*), it is called *Abila* of Lysanias; from this, or some other governor of it, of that name; and the phrase, "from Abilene to Jerusalem," is to be met with in the Talmud (*q*), which doubtless designs this same place: who this Lysanias was, is not certain; he was not the son of Herod the great, as Eusebius suggests (*r*), nor that Lysanias, the son of Ptolomy Minnaeus, whom Josephus (*s*) speaks of, though very probably he might be a descendent of his: however, when Tiberius Cæsar reigned at Rome, and Pontius Pilate governed in Judea, and Herod Antipas in Galilee, and Philip his brother in Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias in Abilene, John the Baptist began to preach and baptize; to fix the æra of whose ministry and baptism, all this is said.

2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

Some difficulty here arises, how these two could be both high priests; when, according to the law of God, and the usages of the Jewish nation, there was to be, and was but one high priest at a time: many things are observed by writers to solve this difficulty. Some go this way; that though, according to the divine institution, and the practice of former times, there was but one high priest at a time; yet now, through the corruption of the present age, there were two high priests; or at least, which officiated alternately in the same year: but of such a corruption no instance can be given, even in those corrupt times; and as Maimonides says (*t*), there can be but "one high priest," בְּכֵל הָעוֹלָם "in all the world;" and besides, is contrary to their canons, which were then in being, and still remain; one (*u*) of which runs thus, גְּדוּלֵי כְהוֹנִים "they do not appoint two high priests at once." Others suppose, that these two annually performed the office of high priest by turns; that Caiaphas was high priest

one year, and Annas another: it is true indeed, that through the corruption of those times, this office became venal; hence it is said in the Talmud (*x*), "Because they gave money for the priesthood, they changed it every twelve months." And which is more largely expressed by one of their commentators (*y*); "Because the high priests, who were under the second temple, after Simeon the just, gave money to minister in the high priest's office, and because they were wicked, they did not fill up their years, therefore they changed every year." But though it is certain that there were frequent, and sometimes annual changes in the priesthood, hence it is said of Caiaphas, *John xi. 49.* and chapter xviii. 13. that he *was high priest the same year*; yet it does not appear that he and Annas took it yearly by turns; for Caiaphas continued in that office some years, even till after the death of Christ: and besides had this been the case, as one of them could be but high priest for the year in being, both in one year, as here, could not with propriety be said to be high priests. Others take another method, and suppose Caiaphas to be properly the high priest, as he certainly was; and Annas so called, because he had been one formerly, the same with *Ananus*, the son of Seth; who was put into the priesthood by Quirinius, in the room of Joazar, and was deposed by Valerius Gratus, and Ishmael ben Phabi, was put into his room: but though there may be instances of persons being called high priests, who had been in that office, after they were removed from it, yet no reason can be given, why Annas should be peculiarly called so, when there were, in all probability, several alive who had been in that office as well as he; as Joazar his predecessor, and Ishmael ben Phabi, who succeeded Joazar, and after him Eleazar the son of Annas, and then Simeon ben Camhith; nor why he should be put in the annals of the high priests, in a year in which he was not one. It seems most likely therefore, that he was the *Sagan* of the priests, of which office mention is frequently made in the Jewish writings (*z*); yea, we often read of *Chanina*, or *Chananiab*, or *Ananias*, perhaps the same with this *Annas*, who is called, סֵגָן כֹּהֲנִים "the Sagan of the priests (*a*)."
This officer was not a deputy high priest, or one that was substituted to officiate occasionally, in the room of the high priest, when any thing hindered him, or rendered him unfit for his office; as on the day of atonement, if the high priest contracted any pollution, they substituted another

(*l*) De Excid. l. 1. c. 46. & 3. 26. (*m*) Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 28. (*n*) Ibid. Antiqu. l. 18. c. 6.
(*o*) Lib. 5. c. 18. (*p*) Lib. 5. c. 15. (*q*) T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 59. 2. (*r*) H. R. Eccl. l. 1. c. 9. 10.
(*s*) De Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 13. §. 1. (*t*) In Mifn. Menachot, c. 13. §. 10. (*u*) T. Hierof. Sanhedrim, fol. 29. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Cele Hamikdash, c. 4. §. 15.

(*x*) T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 8. 2. (*y*) Bartenora in Mifn. Yoma, c. 1. §. 1. (*z*) Targum in 2 Kings xxiii. 4. & xxv. 18. & in Jer. xx. 1. & xxix. 26. & lii. 24.
(*a*) Mifn. Shekalim, c. 6. §. 1. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 8. 1. Juchasin, fol. 57. 1.

another to minister (*b*) ; which was not the Sagan, but another priest ; and even such an one was called an high priest, as appears from the following story (*c*). "It happened to Simeon ben Camhith (a predecessor of Caiaphas) that he went out to speak with the king, on the evening of the day of atonement, and the spittle was scattered from his mouth, upon his garments, and he was unclean ; and his brother Judah went in, and ministered in his stead in the high priesthood ; and their mother saw her two sons high priests in one day." But the sagan was not an officer *pro tempore*, or so much under the high priest, and one in his stead, as a ruler and governor over other priests. Maimonides says of him thus (*d*) ; "They appoint one priest, who is to the high priest as a second to the king, and he is called Sagan ; and he is called a ruler ; and he stands at the right hand of the high priest continually ; and this is an honour to him, and all the priests are under the hand of the Sagan." The account given of him in the Talmud (*e*), is this ; "In five things the sagan ministers ; The sagan says to him, My lord, high priest, lift up thy right hand (that is, when he took the lots out of the vessel for the goats, on the day of atonement, which (*f*) should be slain ;) the sagan is on his right hand, and the father of the sanhedrim on his left (that is, when he went to the east of the court and the north of the altar (*g*), where were the two goats, and the vessel in which were the lots ;) the sagan waved with the vails, or linen clothes ; the sagan held him by his right hand, and caused him to ascend (by the steps to the altar ;) and no man was appointed an high priest before he was a sagan." Now these might be as Seraiah and Zephaniah, the one chief priest, and the other second priest, *Jer.* lii. 24. where the Targum and Jarchi interpret the text, "the Sagan of the priests." And this being an office of such dignity and authority, supposing Annas in it, though he was not the high priest, yet being the head of all the other priests, he might be called one, and be joined with Caiaphas, and set before him ; not only because he had been an high priest, but because he was his father-in-law :

The word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias] A priest of the order of Abia ; and son of Elizabeth, a daughter of Aaron, and cousin of Mary, the mother of Jesus ; as it had come formerly to

the prophets, and particularly to Jeremy, who was sanctified from the womb, as the Baptist was : he was blessed with a prophetic Spirit, and with the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, and with a wonderful revelation of the Messiah, and of the Gospel-dispensation ; and was abundantly qualified for the work he was called to, and sent to perform : and this befel him

In the wilderness] That is, of Judea, where he had been brought up and lived, and from whence and where he came, preaching : he had lived a solitary life, and had not learnt his doctrine from men, but had his mission, ministry, and baptism, from heaven.

3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins :

He came out of the wilderness of Judea, where he first began his ministry, to some parts of the country that bordered on Jordan, and was near unto it, on either side the river ; sometimes he was at Bethabara, and sometimes at Ænon, near Salim ; for he did not take a tour round about all the country that encompassed Jordan, but being at it, or in places adjacent to it, all the country round about came to him ; see *Matt.* iii. 5.

Preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins] This was the work and office of John, as signified by Elias, in *Mal.* iv. 5, 6. The Jews say (*b*), "The Israelites will not repent, till Elias comes ; as it is said, *Mal.* iv. 5, 6. in the land of Israel repentance delights." John came into this land, preaching this doctrine ; see the note on *Mark* i. 4.

4 As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Chapter xl. 3. *Saying, the voice of one crying, &c.* see the note on *Matt.* iii. 3.

5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low ; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth ;

Luke cites more out of the same prophecy, as relating to the times of John the Baptist and the Messiah, than the other Evangelists Matthew and Mark do : in the prophet it is, *every valley shall be exalted* ; which is done, by filling it up : the metaphor is persisted in, of preparing and clearing the way, for the coming of the Messiah, done by the

(*b*) Misa. Yoma, c. 1. §. 1. (*c*) T. Hierof. Yoma, fol. 38. 4. Megilla, fol. 72. 1. Horavot, fol. 47. 4. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 47. 1. Bemidbar Rabba, §. 2. fol. 180. 3.
(*d*) Hilch. Cele Hamikdash, c. 4. §. 16. (*e*) T. Hierof. Yoma, fol. 41. 1. (*f*) Misa. Yoma, c. 4. §. 1.
(*g*) Misa. Yoma, c. 3. §. 9.

(*b*) Pitke Eliezer, c. 44

the ministry of John; under which, such souls as were lowly and humble, and depressed with the sense of sin, should be raised, and directed to believe in Christ, and be filled with divine consolation from him. These words are owned by the Jews⁽ⁱ⁾, to belong to the world to come; that is, the times of the Messiah; though they understand them of making way for the return of the Israelites from captivity, by the Messiah: just as they suppose such things were done by the miraculous cloud for the children of Israel, as they passed through the wilderness; of which they say ^(k), "If there was any low place, it raised it up; or high place, it made it low, and caused them to be plain; as it is said, *Isaiah xl. 3. And every valley shall be exalted,*" &c. But what they say of this cloud literally, as preparing the way for the Israelites, is in a spiritual sense true of the ministry of John; whereby many of the children of Israel had the way prepared for them, for the reception of the Messiah; when, as every humble soul had its expectation raised, and its faith encouraged, and its heart filled with spiritual joy; so, such as were proud and haughty, were humbled:

And every mountain and hill shall be brought low] All such as are elated with their own abilities, and boast of their righteousness, trust in themselves, and look with disdain and contempt on others, their loftiness shall be bowed down, and their haughtiness made low; and the Messiah alone, in his person, grace, and righteousness, be exalted:

And the crooked shall be made straight] Such as are of a crooked spirit, and walk in crooked ways, with the workers of iniquity, shall have new spirits given them, and be directed to right ways, and be led in the paths of righteousness and truth:

And the rough ways shall be made smooth] And men of rough tempers, comparable to lions and bears, shall become quiet and peaceable, smooth and easy; and moreover, whatever difficulties were in the minds of men concerning the Messiah, the end of his coming, and the nature of his kingdom; and whatever impediments were in the way of embracing him when come, should now be removed, at least from many persons. R. David Kimchi, a very noted Jewish commentator^(l), acknowledges that the whole of this passage is to be understood, ^{וְרַךְ מַשַּׁל} "by way of parable," in a mystical and figurative sense.

6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

By the *salvation of God* is meant, the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of God's appointing and sending; and who is the author of

that salvation which God resolved on, contrived, and approved of; and is his ordinance for salvation unto the ends of the earth, for all his elect; see chapter ii. 30. whom a great number among the Jews should, and did see, with their bodily eyes; and whom not only God's elect among them, but also all of them among the Gentiles, should behold with an eye of faith, for themselves, as their Saviour and Redeemer. It is matter of question, what passage is here referred to; whether *Isaiah xl. 5.* or *Isaiah lii. 10.* the latter comes nearest to the words, and the former stands closely connected with the expressions before cited; though it is usual with the New Testament-writers, to join together passages which stand in different places of the same prophet, and even which are in different books; see *Rom. ix. 33.* compared with *Isaiah viii. 14.* and chapter xxviii. 16. and *Matt. xxi. 5.* compared with *Isaiah lxii. 11.* and *Zech. ix. 9.* and that agreeable to the method used by Jewish writers ^(m).

7 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

That is, John, as the Ethiopic version reads; and the multitude to whom he spake the following words, were many of the Pharisees and Sadducees, as appears from *Matt. iii. 7.*

That came forth to be baptized of him] Who came out of their houses, towns, and cities, round about, to the place where John was; and hearing and seeing what he was about, desired to be admitted to his baptism: not that they "were baptized of him," as the Arabic version renders it; but they came with a view of being baptized, were it thought fit and proper they should: but John refused them, saying to them,

O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? See the note on *Matt. iii. 7.*

8 Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

Or *meet* for it, such as will shew it to be true and genuine:

And begin not to say within yourselves] In one of Beza's copies, and in another of Stephens's, it was

(i) T. Hierof. Erubin, fol. 25. 2.

(k) Bemidbar Rabba,

§. 1. fol. 177. 1, 2. Vid. Targ. in Cant. ii. 6. & Jarchi in Cant. ii. 6.

(l) In *Isaiah xl. 4.*

(m) Vid. Surenhus. Biblos Katallages, de modis Allegandi, &c. Theol. 7. p. 45, 46, 319.

was read, *think not*, as in *Matt. iii. 9.* the sense is the same. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, leave out the phrase, *within yourselves*: what they are forbid to say follows,

We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.] Which need not be thought strange, when the creation of Adam out of the earth, and the production of such a numerous offspring, as the Israelites were, from Abraham and Sarah, when past all hope of children, and are signified by the rock and pit in *Isaiab li. 1, 2.* are considered; see the note on *Matt. iii. 9.*

9 And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Laid not only to Jesse's family, which was a root in a dry ground, and to Jerusalem, the metropolis of the nation; but to the root of the vain boasting of every Jew; their descent from Abraham, the covenant made with him, their ecclesiastical state and civil polity, all which would quickly be at an end: the Romans were now among them, the ax in God's hand; by means of whom, utter ruin and destruction would be brought upon their nation, city, and temple:

Every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.] See the note on *Matt. iii. 10.*

10 And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?

Not the same as in *7.* the Sadducees and Pharisees, for they seemed not to be at all affected with, nor wrought upon by the ministry of John; but rather were displeased with him, and turned their backs on him, and rejected him and his baptism; but the common people, that stood by; who hearing John speak of *wrath to come*, and of *repentance*, and *fruits worthy of it*, were filled with concern about these things, and inquire,

Saying, What shall we do?] Either to escape the wrath and vengeance coming on the nation, and also eternal ruin and destruction; and Beza says, that in two of his copies, and one of them his most ancient one, it is added, *to be saved*; and so in two of Stephen's; which confirms the above sense, and makes their inquiry to be the same with the jailor's, *Acts xvi. 30.* Or else their meaning is, What are the things we are to do, or the fruits we are to bring forth, the duties we are to perform, in order to testify the truth and genuineness of our repentance? which latter seems most agreeable.

11 He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

By telling them what they should do; and he does not put them upon ceremonial observances, nor severe exercises of religion, nor even the duties of the first table of the law, and others of the second, though necessary to be done; but upon acts of beneficence and kindness to fellow-creatures in distress; and these are what may be called love of our neighbour, and which involves the love of God, and so the whole law; for the one cannot be rightly exercised without the other:

He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none.] Not both of them, but one of them: a man is not obliged to go naked himself, in order to clothe another; and so the Persian and Ethiopic versions read, "let him give one to him that has not;" that has not a garment to wear. This is not to be understood strictly and literally, that a man is obliged to give one of his coats, if he has more than one, to a person in want of clothing; it will be sufficient to answer the intent of this exhortation, if he supplies his want another way, by furnishing him with money to buy one: the meaning is, that persons according to their abilities, and of what they can spare, should communicate to those that are in distress: much less is it to be concluded from hence, that it is not lawful for a man to have more coats than one.

And he that hath meat, let him do likewise.] That is, he that has a sufficiency of food, and more than enough for himself and family, let him give it freely and cheerfully to the poor and needy, *for with such sacrifices God is well pleased*: and when such acts of kindness are done in faith, from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God, they are the fruits of grace, and such as are meet for repentance, and shew it to be genuine. John instances in these two articles, food and raiment, as containing the necessities of human life, and including every thing by which one may be serviceable to another.

12 Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, What shall we do?

Being convinced under John's ministry of the evils of their past life, and desirous of being admitted to baptism, to which they understood repentance, and fruits meet for the same, were pre-requisite: these came nearer to John,

And said unto him, Master, what shall we do?] We have been very wicked persons, what shall we do

to escape divine vengeance? or what are the particular duties we are to perform? or the fruits meet for repentance, we are to bring forth; that so we may be admitted to the ordinance of baptism, which requires, as previous to it, a true and hearty repentance? Of these men, see the note on *Matt.* vi. 46. and chapter ix. 9—11.

13 And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

Not by advising them to quit their employments, as if it was a thing unlawful to impose, pay, and collect taxes, but by directing them to perform their office aright:

Exact no more than that which is appointed you] By the government: there were two sorts of publicans; there were some that exacted more than what they were ordered, and settled the tax at their own pleasure, and collected what they would themselves; and these were very odious to the people, and were reckoned with the worst of sinners, as thieves and robbers; but there were others, who behaved according to the orders of the government, and these were submitted to, as appears from the Jewish canons: "Says (n) Samuel, The judgment of a kingdom, is judgment (that is, the orders of a government ought to be regarded;) R. Chanina bar Cahana says, that Samuel says it of a publican, שאין לו קצבה "who has nothing appointed for him:" the house of R. Jannai say, "of a publican that stands of himself." The gloss is, "The judgment of a kingdom is judgment;" this is he that receives from a king, a tax (to gather) in a thing, קצב "that is fixed," so and so for the year, and he is no robber: "who has nothing appointed for him," but takes "according to his whole will and pleasure." Maimonides expresses this in plainer language (o), "In what things is it said that a publican is as thieves? When a Gentile publican, or a Gentile that stands of himself, or a publican that stands for the king, and hath nothing fixed for him, but he takes what he pleases, and leaves what he pleases: but a publican with whom the king agrees, and orders that he should take a third or a fourth, or רבי קצוב "any thing that is appointed;" and he constitutes an Israelitish publican to collect that part for the king, and it is known that the man is faithful, and does not add any thing to what the king has decreed; he is not in the class of robbers, for the judgment of a king is judgment." Now such publicans as these, were received and submitted to, but others were rejected. So Moses Kotsensis

says (p), that "publicans that take, קצבין יותר ממה שנתקן להם "more than what is appointed for them, are rejected." From all which we may learn, what publicans these were, that came to John's baptism, and put the above question to him; that they were Jewish publicans, and not Gentiles; and therefore John says nothing to them, but what concerned their employment; which he doubtless would have done, if they had been ignorant Gentiles: and also we see the reason of his expressing himself in this manner, since publicans were very apt to go beyond their orders, and require more than was fixed for them to collect; and likewise that John in this advice, spoke the sense of the Jews themselves; who did not refuse to pay tribute, excepting some few, provided no more was exacted than the government appointed; and as temptations to such evils were very great, and it lay in the power of these men to impose on the people, and extort from them, to abstain from such practices was an argument of the fear of God, of the truth of grace, and of the sincerity of repentance.

14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.

Or asked him: why our translators have rendered it, demanded of him, I know not, unless they thought that such language best suited persons of a military character. Some think these were Gentile soldiers, since it does not look so likely that the Romans would employ Jews as soldiers in their own country; though it is probable that they were Jews, in the pay of the Romans, who belonged to Herod, tetrarch of Galilee, or to Philip of Iturea, whose dominions lay near the place where John was; since it is certain, that there were many of the Jews that betook themselves to a military life; and seeing John instructed them in no part of natural or revealed religion, but what was suitable to their character and employment: for upon these men

Saying, *What shall we do?*] To avoid the threatened ruin, and to prove the truth of our repentance, that so we may be admitted to the holy ordinance of baptism? John replied,

Do violence to no man] Or shake him, or put him into bodily fear, by threatening, hectoring, and bullying him, and drawing the sword upon him; which

(n) T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 113. 1.

6. 5. 11, 12.

(o) Hilch. Gezala,

(p) Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 214. Vid. T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 25. 2, & Gloss. in ibid.

which is usual, upon the least offence, for such persons to do :

Neither accuse any falsely] Or “play the sycophant;” who, in order to flatter some, bring malicious accusations against others; and which was a vice that too much prevailed among the Jewish soldiery; who either to curry favour with the Roman officers and governors, would wrongfully accuse their fellow-soldiers, or countrymen, to them; or in order to extort sums of money from them, that they might live in a more luxurious manner than their common pay would admit of: wherefore, it follows,

And be content with your wages] Allowed by the government, and do not seek to increase them by any unlawful methods, as by mutiny and sedition, by rebelling against your officers, or by ill usage of the people. The Jewish Rabbins have adopted this word, *שכר* into their language in the Mishnic and Talmudic writings (9); and their gloss explains it by the money for the soldiers, and the hire of soldiers, as here; and it includes every thing which by the Romans were given to their soldiers for pay, and which was food as well as money.

15 ¶ And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;

Of the coming of the Messiah; Daniel’s seventy weeks being now accomplished, the sceptre being departed from Judah, and the Romans having the government in their hands, from whom they hoped for a deliverance by Christ:

And all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not] About which they had many reasonings and debates; some doubting of it, others ready to believe it, from his extraordinary birth, the singular holiness of his life, the power and efficacy of his doctrine, the new ordinance he administered, the restoration of religion by him, the freedom he took in reproving the vices of men, and the apt answers he gave to the questions now put to him. And that the Messiah was born, though he was not, as yet, made manifest, they might conclude, not only from the fulfilment of several prophecies, but from the song of Zacharias, the declaration of Simeon and Anna in the temple, and of the wise men that came from the east; and John appearing in such an unusual manner, they were ready to hope that he was the person; though they did not consider that he was of the tribe of Levi, and not of Judah; from which latter the Messiah was to spring; but this might be unattended to by them, and Satan might have

an hand in it, to hide the true Messiah from them.

16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

For some of them might not only to think in their hearts, but express with their mouths, the apprehension they had of him; and might put the question to him, as the priests and Levites from Jerusalem afterwards did; or he might know the secret thoughts of their hearts by divine revelation; or be apprized by his disciples of the private sentiments of the people concerning him: and therefore, to put them out of doubt, and that he might not have an honour conferred on him which did not belong to him, he addressed himself in a very public manner to the whole multitude, in the hearing of them all; though the word *all* is left out in the Syriac and Persian versions, but rightly retained in others, being in all copies, and having a considerable emphasis on it: and said the following words,

I indeed baptize you with water] Matthew adds, *unto repentance*; upon the profession of repentance:

But one mightier than I cometh] That is, after me, as Matthew records it;

The latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose] Neither to bear his shoes after him, as Matthew says, nor to untie his shoe-string, or unbuckle his shoe, both which were menial actions with the Jews:

He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire] As he did some of their nation, his own disciples, on the day of pentecost; see the note on Matthew iii. 11.

17 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

See the note on Matthew iii. 12.

18 And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

Relating to the person and office of the Messiah, to the nature of his kingdom, the Gospel-dispensation, and to faith in him; for he pointed him out to the people, and exhorted them to believe in him, and expressed much joy and pleasure on the hearing of his success and increase; and these, with others beside, in his exhortation; or whilst he was exhorting, or comforting,

Preached he unto the people] Publishing the Gospel, the good news, and glad tidings of the Messiah’s

(9) Mish. Sanhedrim, c. 2, §. 4. T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 18, 2. & 21, 2.

siah's being come, and of life, righteousness, and salvation by him.

19 ¶ But Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done,

Reproved by John, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions add:

For Herodias his brother Philip's wife] For taking her to wife, whilst his brother Philip was living. The account, which the Jewish (r) chronologer gives of this Herod, and of this fact of his, and John's reproving him for it, and the consequence of it, perfectly agrees with this of the Evangelist. "Herod Antipater, and there are some that call him, מִסְרָקִי "the Tetrarch," was a son of "Herod the first, and brother of Archelaus; and "he was the third king of the family of Herod; "and he was very wicked, and a destroying man: "many of the wise men of Israel he slew with the "sword; and he took the wife of his brother "Philip, whilst he was alive, to himself for wife; "and John, the high priest, because הוֹכִימוֹ "he "reproved him" for this, he slew him with the "sword; with many of the wise men of Israel." And John reproved him not only for this sin, but but others:

And for all the evils which Herod had done] His revellings, debaucheries, murders, &c. all which John in great faithfulness, and with much freedom, told him of, and rebuked him for; for Herod had had a particular respect for him, and often had him with him, and heard him gladly, when John had an opportunity of speaking personally to him.

20 Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

This sin to all his other sins, and which was of a more flagitious nature, and attended with more aggravating circumstances, especially in the issue of it:

That he shut up John in prison] In the castle of Macherus, by the instigation of Herodias; see *Matthew* xiv. 3.

21 ¶ Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

People that came from several parts to John for this purpose, even as many as he judged to be proper subjects of that ordinance, as many of the common people, publicans, soldiers, &c.

It came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized] Of John in Jordan, he coming from Galilee thither on that account:

And praying] After he was baptized, for the coming down of the Spirit upon him, as man, to anoint, and qualify him for his office he was now about to enter on publicly; and for success in it, and for a testimony from heaven that he was the Son of God, and the true Messiah:

The heaven was opened] See the note on *Matthew* iii. 16.

22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

In a corporeal form, in a visible manner, and was seen with bodily eyes, at least by John the administrator; to whom this was a signal of his being the Messiah, and a fresh confirmation of it:

Like a dove upon him] Either in the form of a dove, or this corporeal form, whatever it was, descended and hovered on him as a dove does:

And a voice came from heaven] At the same time the Holy Ghost came down upon him;

Which said, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased] And was the voice of the Father; and the whole of this was an answer of Christ's prayer; see the note on *Matthew* iii. 16, 17, and *Mark* i. 11.

23 ¶ And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli;

Or Jesus, when he was baptized, and began his public ministry, was about thirty years of age; an age at which the priests, under the law, who were typical of Christ, entered on their work, *Numb.* iv. 23. *1 Chron.* xxiii. 3. The word *began* is left out in the Syriac and Persic versions; and is often indeed redundant, as in *ψ.* 8. and frequently in *Mark's* Gospel. The Arabic version renders it, "Jesus began to enter into the thirtieth year;" which carries the sense the same with our translation:

Being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph] Who had espoused Mary before she was with child of the Holy Ghost, and afterwards took her to wife, and brought up her son; so that it was not known but that he was the son of Joseph. Whether or no the Jewish notion of the Messiah, the son of Joseph (s), may not take its rise from hence, may be considered: however, Joseph might very rightly be called, as he was supposed to be, the father of Jesus, by a rule which obtains with the Jews (t), "That he that brings up, and not he that begets," is

(r) T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 1. Jarchi & Aben Ezra in *Zech.* xii. 10. & *iii.* 7.

(t) *Shemot* Rabba, §. 46. fol. 143. 1.

(r) *Gana Tzemach* David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.

“is called the father,” or parent; of which they give various instances (*u*) in Joseph, in Michal, and in Pharaoh’s daughter.

Which was the son of Eli] Meaning, not that Joseph was the son of Eli; for he was the son of Jacob, according to *Matt. i. 16.* but Jesus was the son of Eli; and which must be understood, and carried through the whole genealogy, as thus; Jesus the son of Matthat, Jesus the son of Levi, Jesus the son of Melchi, &c. till you come to Jesus the son of Adam, and Jesus the Son of God: though it is true indeed that Joseph was the son of Eli, having married his daughter; for Mary was the daughter of Eli: and so the Jews speak of one Mary, the daughter of Eli, by whom they seem to design the mother of our Lord: for they tell (*x*) us of one, “*that saw מרים ברת עלי*” “Mary the daughter of Eli,” in the shades, hanging by the “fibres of her breasts; and there are that say, the gate, or, as elsewhere (*y*), the bar of the gate of hell is fixed to her ear.” By the horrible malice in the words, you may know who is meant: however, this we gain by it, that by their own confession, Mary is the daughter of Eli; which accords with this genealogy of the Evangelist, who traces it from Mary, under her husband Joseph; though she is not mentioned, because of a rule with the Jews (*z*), that “The family of the mother is not called a family.”

24 Which was *the son of Matthat*, which was *the son of Levi*, which was *the son of Melchi*, which was *the son of Janna*, which was *the son of Joseph*,

These two Grotius says are omitted in the ancient exemplars; and he thinks they ought to be left out; and for which he mentions the authorities of Irenæus, Africanus, Eusebius, Nazianzen, Jerom; and Augustin: but not only the Vulgate Latin, but all the Oriental versions, retain them:

Which was the son of Melchi] And who, he thinks, was the immediate father of Eli:

Which was the son of Janna] Frequent mention is made in the Jewish writings (*a*) of מלכא “king Jannai,” who is said to be the same with king Jochanan, or John, the son of Simeon, the son of Mattathiah, that was called Hyrcanus; and his son Alexander, that reigned after him, was also called Jannai (*b*); but whether either of these is the same with this *Janna*, is not certain: but this may be observed, that they were both before the times of Herod, and the birth of Jesus, some years. And

Jannai is called, in the chronicle of Jedidiah of Alexandria, or Philo the Jew (*c*), Hyrcanus the second, who reigned sixteen years:

Which was the son of Joseph] This Joseph, according to the same chronicle, is called *Joseph* the second, and surnamed *Arfis*, and was greatly honoured by Ptolemy, and governed sixty years; and accordingly we shall meet with another Josephanon.

25 Which was *the son of Mattathias*, which was *the son of Amos*, which was *the son of Naum*, which was *the son of Essi*, which was *the son of Nagge*,

Mattathias is surnamed *Siloah*, by the same Philo, who governed ten years:

Which was the son of Amos] Whose surname, according to the same author, was *Sirag*; or, as some, *Syrach*, or *Shyrach*, who governed fourteen years:

Which was the son of Naum] Who was called *Mesalut*, or *Maslot*, who governed seven years:

Which was the son of Essi] Or Eli, surnamed *Haggai*, who governed eight years;

Which was the son of Nagge] With Philo he is called *Nagid Artasat*, or *Artaxat*, and said to govern ten years.

26 Which was *the son of Maath*, which was *the son of Mattathias*, which was *the son of Semei*, which was *the son of Joseph*, which was *the son of Juda*,

Maath was surnamed *Aser*, who governed nine years:

Which was the son of Mattathias] Called *Eli Mattathias*, who governed twelve years:

Which was the son of Semei] And named *Abner Semei*, who governed eleven years:

Which was the son of Joseph] Called *Joseph* the first, who governed seven years:

Which was the son of Juda] Who, according to the same writer, must be *Judas*, surnamed *Hyrcanus* the first, who governed fourteen years.

27 Which was *the son of Joanna*, which was *the son of Rhesa*, which was *the son of Zorobabel*, which was *the son of Salathiel*, which was *the son of Neri*,

Johannes, or *John*, the son of *Rhesa Mesullam*, who governed fifty-three years:

Which was the son of Rhesa] Called, by the above writer, *Rhesa Mesullam*; see *1 Chron. iii. 19.* and said, by him, to govern sixty-six years:

Which

(u) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 19. 2. Vid. T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 13. 1.

(x) T. Hierof. Sanhedrim, fol. 23. 3.

(y) Ibid. Chagiga, fol. 77. 4.

(z) Jochasin, fol. 55. 2.

(a) T. Hierof. Beracot, fol. 11. 2. & passim.

(b) Juchasin, fol. 15. 1. & 16. 2.

(c) Apud Voss, Not. ad Chronol. R. David Ganz, p. 311.

Which was the son of Zorobabel] Who governed fifty-eight years:

Which was the son of Salathiel] The same with Shealthiel; see the note on Matt. i. 12.

Which was the son of Neri] The same with Jechonias, according to the Alexandrian chronicle; see the note on Matt. i. 12.

28 Which was *the son* of Melchi, which was *the son* of Addi, which was *the son* of Cofam, which was *the son* of Elmodam, which was *the son* of Er,

29 Which was *the son* of Jose, which was *the son* of Eliezer, which was *the son* of Jorim, which was *the son* of Matthat, which was *the son* of Levi,

30 Which was *the son* of Simeon, which was *the son* of Juda, which was *the son* of Joseph, which was *the son* of Jonan, which was *the son* of Eliakim,

31 Which was *the son* of Melea, which was *the son* of Menan, which was *the son* of Mattatha, which was *the son* of Nathan, which was *the son* of David,

Ver. 28, 29, 30, 31. *Which was the son of Melchi, &c.]* This, with the following, *Addi, Cofam, Elmodam, Er, Jose, Eliezer, Jorim, Matthat, Levi, Simeon, Juda, Joseph, Jonan, Eliakim, Melea, Menan, and Mattatha*, all lived before the captivity, and were of the house of David, in the line of Nathan; for it follows,

Which was the son of Nathan] Of which persons no mention is made in the Old-Testament, nor even of Mattatha, the son of Nathan: his sons that are mentioned are *Azariah, Zabud, and Abisbar*, 1 Kings iv. 5, 6. which last is thought to be the same with Mattatha: that Nathan was the son of David, as the order of things here directs,

Which was the son of David] Is clear from 1 Sam. v. 14. 1 Chron. iii. 5. and chap. xiv. 4.

32 Which was *the son* of Jesse, which was *the son* of Obed, which was *the son* of Booz, which was *the son* of Salmon, which was *the son* of Naasson,

33 Which was *the son* of Aminadab, which was *the son* of Aram, which was *the son* of Esrom, which was *the son* of Phares, which was *the son* of Juda,

34 Which was *the son* of Jacob, which was *the son* of Isaac, which was *the son* of

Abraham, which was *the son* of Thara, which was *the son* of Nachor,

Ver. 32, 33, 34. *Which was the son of Jesse, &c.]* The order of the persons from Jesse to Abraham, as *Obed, Booz, Salmon, Naasson, Aminadab, Aram, or Ram, Esrom*, (for *Joram*, which the Arabic version here inserts, is to be rejected) *Phares, Judah, Jacob, Isaac, Abraham*, perfectly agrees with the genealogy of Matthew, and the accounts of the Old-Testament:

Which was the son of Thara] The same with *Terah*, Gen. xi. 26, 27. called by the Septuagint, *Tharra*:

Which was the son of Nachor] The same with *Nahor*, Gen. xi. 24, 25. called there, by the Septuagint, as here.

35 Which was *the son* of Saruch, which was *the son* of Ragau, which was *the son* of Phalec, which was *the son* of Heber, which was *the son* of Sala.

The Septuagint call him *Serouch*, the same with *Serug*, Gen. xi. 22, 23.

Which was the son of Ragau] So the Septuagint, the same with *Reu*, Gen. xi. 20, 21.

Which was the son of Phalec] The same with *Pelleg*, Gen. xi. 18, 19. the Septuagint reads as here:

Which was the son of Heber] Or *Eber*, Gen. xi. 16, 17.

Which was the son of Sala] Or *Salah*, Gen. xi. 14, 15. the Septuagint there call him *Sala*.

36 Which was *the son* of Cainan, which was *the son* of Arphaxad, which was *the son* of Sem, which was *the son* of Noe, which was *the son* of Lamech,

This *Cainan* is not mentioned by Moses in Gen. xi. 12. nor has he ever appeared in any Hebrew copy of the Old-Testament, nor in the Samaritan version, nor in the Targums; nor is he mentioned by Josephus, nor in 1 Chron. i. 24. where the genealogy is repeated; nor is it in Beza's most ancient Greek copy of Luke: it indeed stands in the present copies of the Septuagint, but was not originally there; and therefore could not be taken by Luke from thence; but seems to be owing to some early negligent transcriber of Luke's Gospel, and since put into the Septuagint to give it authority: I say *early*, because it is in many Greek copies, and in the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, even in the Syriac, the oldest of them; but ought not to stand, neither in the text, nor in any version: for certain it is, there never was such a *Cainan*, the son of Arphaxad, for *Salah* was his

his son; and with him the next words should be connected,

Which was the son of Arphaxad] See Gen. xi. 12,

13.

Which was the son of Sem] Or Shem, Gen. xi. 10,

11.

Which was the son of Noe] Or Noab, Gen. v. 32.

Which was the son of Lamech] Gen. v. 28, 29.

37 *Which was the son of Mathusala, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jared, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan,*

The same with *Methuselah*; and so he is called by the Septuagint in Gen. v. 25—27.

Which was the son of Enoch] Gen. v. 21, 22.

Which was the son of Jared] Gen. v. 18, 19.

Which was the son of Maleleel] The same with *Mahaleleel*; who is also so called by the Seventy interpreters, in Gen. v. 15, 16. as here;

Which was the son of Cainan] Gen. v. 12, 13.

38 *Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.*

Genesis v. 9, 10.

Which was the son of Seth] Gen. v. 6, 7.

Which was the son of Adam] Gen. v. 3, 4.

Which was the son of God] Not begotten, as all the rest were, by their immediate parents, but created by God, in a supernatural manner, out of the dust of the earth, and quickened with the breath of God: so *Adam* is, by the Jews (*d*), called, אֱלֹהִים בֶּן "the Son of God:" though this may be understood of *Jesus*, the son of *Joseph*, of *Heli*, &c. and so on to this clause, *the Son of God*; being so as a divine person, to whom the human nature was united, and on that account so called; see *Luke* i. 35. Thus, as *Matthew* gives us the regal line of *Christ*, shewing him to be heir to the throne of his father *David*, *Luke* gives the natural line of *Christ*; and as *Matthew* traces his genealogy down from *Abraham*, in a descending line, to *Joseph*, the husband of *Mary*, the mother of *Jesus*; *Luke* traces it upwards, in an ascending line, from *Mary* by *Joseph*, even up to *Adam*; to whom the *Messiah* was first promised, and who was a type of the second *Adam*, from whom he descended, though not by ordinary generation; nay, even to *God* himself: *Christ*, according to his divine nature, was the only-begotten of the Father; and as to his human nature, had a body prepared by him, and in the fulness of time was *God manifest in the flesh*.

(d) *Sepher Cosri*, orat. 2, fig. 14, fol. 68, 1.

CHAP. IV.

In this chapter we have an account of *Christ's* fasting forty days in the wilderness, and being there tempted by the devil, *ψ*. 1—13. he returneth into *Galilee*, and thence to *Nazareth*, where he preacheth, *ψ*. 14—20. and a reason is given why he did no miracles there, *ψ*. 21—27. They being angry, endeavour to kill him, *ψ*. 28—30. *Christ* teacheth at *Caper-naum* on the sabbath, to the admiration of his hearers, *ψ*. 31, 32. he casteth a devil out of a man, *ψ*. 33—37. and healeth *Peter's* mother-in-law of a fever, and many others that were sick and possessed, *ψ*. 38—41. he preacheth in other cities of *Galilee*, *ψ*. 42—44.

1 AND *Jesus* being full of the holy Ghost returned from *Jordan*, and was led by the spirit into the wilderness,

The Spirit of *God* having descended on him at his baptism, and afresh anointed, and filled his human nature with his gifts, whereby, as man, he was abundantly furnished for the great work of the public ministry, he was just about to enter upon; yet must first go through a series of temptations, and which, through the fulness of the holy Spirit in him, he was sufficiently fortified against.

Returned from Jordan] Where he came, and had been with *John*, and was baptized by him; which when over, he went back from the same side of *Jordan*, to which he came:

And was led by the spirit] The same Spirit, or holy Ghost he was full of; see the note on *Matthew* iv. 1.

Into the wilderness] Of *Judea*, which lay near *Jordan*, and where *John* had been preaching and baptizing; namely, in the habitable part of it: but this was that part which was uninhabited by men, and was infested with wild beasts, and where *Christ* could neither have the comfort and benefit of human society, nor any thing for the sustenance of life, and where he was exposed to the utmost danger; and so in circumstances very opportune and favourable for *Satan* to ply him with his temptations, for which purpose he was led thither.

2 Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.

The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persian, and Ethiopic versions read the phrase, *forty days*, in connection with the latter part of the preceding verse; according to which the sense is, that *Jesus* was led by the Spirit forty days in the wilderness, before he was tempted by *Satan*, and in order to it: but our reading is confirmed by *Mark*, chap. i. 13.

who

who affirms, as here, that he was so long tempted by Satan; as he might be invisibly, and, by internal suggestions, before he appeared visibly, and attacked him openly, with the following temptations. The Ethiopic version adds, "and forty nights:" and such were these days in which Christ was in the wilderness, and fasted, and was tempted there: they were such as included nights as well as days; see *Matt.* iv. 2.

And in those days he did eat nothing] Not any sort of food whatever; he tasted of no kind of eatables or drinkables, during the whole space of forty days; nor in the nights neither, in which the Jews allowed persons to eat in times of fasting; see the note on *Matt.* iv. 2. And this entire abstinence, as it shews the power of Christ, in the supporting of his human nature without food, for such a time, and the disadvantages under which he, as man, combated with Satan; so, that this fast was never designed as an example to his followers, and to be imitated by them:

And when they were ended] The forty days, and forty nights:

He afterward hungered] Which he did not before; and which shews the truth of his human nature; and is mentioned to observe the occasion of the following temptation, and the advantage on the tempter's side.

3 And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

Who now visibly appeared, and spoke unto him with an articulate voice:

If thou be the Son of God] As has been just now declared by a voice from heaven; or seeing thou art in such a relation to God, and so equal to him, and possessed of all divine perfections, and among the rest, of almighty power; wherefore, since thou art hungry, and in a wilderness where no food is to be had,

Command this stone that it be made bread] Say but the word, and this stone, which he held out to him, or pointed at, as lying before them, or any one of the stones, which were in sight, for Matthew speaks of them in the plural number, will immediately be converted into bread, if he was what he was said to be: this he suggests might easily be effected by him, and he had no need to continue hungry.

4 And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

In *Deuteronomy* viii. 3. that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God; suggesting hereby, that when it is the will of God, human

nature may be maintained by the influence of divine power, without the use of ordinary means; and that bread itself, without a divine blessing, would not support life; and so not this stone, or stones, if turned into it: wherefore, it became him, as man, to depend upon God, submit to his will, and wait the issue of providence, who had brought him thither, and not take any such steps to remove his hunger; and especially at his solicitations, who had no other end, but to have him, if he could, at his beck and will.

By every word of God] Is not meant all scripture, and every part of it, which is given by inspiration of God, and may be said to proceed out of his mouth; neither the law, and the precepts of it, as the Jews interpret it, by obedience to which the Israelites lived in the land of Canaan; nor the gospel, and the truths of it, which are the wholesome words of Christ, and the words of faith and good doctrine, with which believers are nourished, and are that to the soul, as bread, or any other wholesome food, is to the body: for of spiritual living, and the means of that, the text is not to be understood; but either of the word of God's power, by which he upholds and sustains all things in being, which he has created; and with which he could, if he would, support the bodies of men without the use of any sort of food; as the bodies of Moses and Elijah, and now the body of Christ, were for many days; and as the bodies of the saints will be after the resurrection, to all eternity: or else the blessing of God, which he commands on bread, and other food, and the virtue and strength which he puts into them and conveys by them, are meant, without which not any sort of food is nourishing; or rather, every thing which God declares and orders to be eat, even every creature of his which is good, and not to be refused, but received with thanksgiving, being sanctified by the word of God and prayer, as well as bread; so manna, which is mentioned in the text in *Deuteronomy*; and likewise any other food, as pulse and water, he is pleased to direct to. Some little difference there is between Matthew and Luke, in citing this passage; in the latter it is, *by every word of God*; and in the former it is nearer the Hebrew text in *Deut.* viii. 3. *by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*; and so some copies read here, as do also the Arabic and Ethiopic versions: but neither of them have the words exactly as in the original text, where it is added, "doth man live;" which doubtless, were not produced by our Lord, as being unnecessary, and therefore not mentioned by any of the Evangelists.

5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms

kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

Somewhere near Jerusalem, but what mountain is not certain. The evangelist Luke makes this to be the second temptation, which, with Matthew, is the third and last; and whose order seems to be more proper and natural than this, and to be the true and genuine one, which Luke neglects, though he does not contradict it: he relates matters of fact, without attending to the strict order of them: whereas Matthew strictly regards it, observing, that after the first temptation, *then the devil taketh him, &c.* and that being finished, says, *again the devil taketh him, &c.* and upon these words, *get thee hence*, with what follows, remarks, that *then the devil leaveth him*: all which shew, that his order is the most accurate, and to be followed. But to go on with the account; the devil having taken him from the pinnacle of the temple, and carried him to some high mountain, as Lebanon, or Pisgah, or some other near Jerusalem, *shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world*; not of the Roman empire only, though that consisted of many kingdoms, and is called the whole world, *Luke ii. 1.* where the same word is used, as here; but of the whole universe, every kingdom that was under the heavens; which he represented to Christ, not in a map, since the glory of them could not be described in that way: for he shewed him

All the glory of them] As Matthew adds; and for this a mountain was no more a proper place, than any other; nor was it any real object he presented to his bodily sight, or any real prospect he gave him of the kingdoms of the world, which are not to be seen from any one place, no not one of them not even from the highest mountain in the world, and still less to be seen together at once in a moment: but this was a mere phantasm, a deception of the sight, with which he endeavoured to impose on Christ, but could not; nor did Christ, who is the maker of the world, and the governor among the nations, need any representation of the kingdoms of the world from him; see the note on *Matt. iv. 8.* and this he did

In a moment of time] In the twinkling of an eye, not by succession, and in process of time, as one kingdom after another, but all at once, and in an instant: what a moment of time is, see the note, as before.

6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

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That is, all the kingdoms of the world, and all the government and jurisdiction over them:

And the glory of them] The riches, honours, and grandeur belonging to them:

For that is delivered unto me] So far he spoke modestly, in that he owned an original, superior governor of them, by whom he pretended they were transferred to him; but lyed, in that he suggested they were put into his hands by him, who had the supreme power over them; and that he acted by his constitution and appointment, as a deputy under him: when what power he had, as the god of the world, was by usurpation, and not by designation of God; and at most only by permission: and least of all was it true what follows;

And to whomsoever I will I give it] Or *these*, as the Vulgate Latin reads; that is, these kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; when so to do is the peculiar and sole prerogative of God: nor can Satan dispose of the goods of a single man, nor of a herd of swine, nor enter into them, without leave from God.

7 If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

Or *before me*; that is, fall down before him, and give him divine worship and homage. A wide difference there is between a good angel and a fallen angel; a good angel will not suffer himself to be worshipped by men, but directs to the worship of God only, *Rev. xix. 10.* and *xxii. 9.* but a fallen angel not only seeks to be worshipped by men, but by the Son of God himself, even by him whom all the holy angels worship, *Heb. i. 6.* This was what Satan at first aspired after, and by which he fell: he affected Deity, and sought to have divine worship given him; and in this sin he still persisted, and grew worse and worse, more daring and insolent, desiring worship of him who is *God over all, blessed for ever.*

All shall be thine] He promises to give him a title to all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, on condition of homage done him, by which he should hold the tenure of them under him; these being delivered up solely to him by the author of them; and he having them in his power, to dispose of them at pleasure. O horrid impudence, arrogance, and insolence!

8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Said the following words, with indignation at him, and detestation of his proposals:

Get thee behind me, Satan] Which are omitted in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, and in three ancient copies of Beza's, and in his most ancient one; but stand in other copies, and in the Arabic version.

For it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve] This passage stands in *Deut. vi. 13.* where the words are, *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and thou shalt swear by his name*: the last clause is not cited by Christ at all, swearing being only a species, or part of religious worship; and the other two clauses are somewhat different from the original text, as here cited, and may be accounted for: instead of *fear the Lord*, it is *worship the Lord*; and the one well explains the other; the fear of God being often, in scripture, put for the whole worship of God, both internal and external: and in the next clause, the word *only* is added by Christ, as expressing the true sense of it, and agreeable to other places of scripture, particularly *1 Sam. vii. 3.* see the note on *Matthew iv. 10.*

9 And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence:

To the holy city, as Matthew calls it, from the wilderness thither; where he found him, and first attacked him, and perhaps he brought him through the air,

And set him on a pinnacle of the temple] Which was in Jerusalem; see the note on *Matt. iv. 5.*

And said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence] From the pinnacle of the temple, on which he was set; see the note on *Matthew iv. 6.*

10 For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee:

11 And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

In *Psalms xci. 11, 12.* *He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.* It is an observation made long ago by Jerom, on *Psalms xci. 11, 12.* that Satan, in citing this text, has left out the middle clause, *to keep thee in all thy ways*, which he knew was against him, and has only taken that which made for him; and on *Matt. iv. 6.* he observes, that this prophecy is not concerning Christ, but any holy man; therefore the devil wrongly interpreted scripture; and that had he certainly known that this is written

concerning the Saviour, he ought to have cited what follows, *Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder, the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet*: and in these observations, he has been followed by many interpreters; but (a) Surenhusius is not satisfied with them, especially with what respects the manner of citation, leaving out some words, and not mentioning others that follow; since such a way of citing, perfectly agrees with the method of the Jewish doctors; who reckon one word of a passage being cited, all that follows, if it makes to the purpose, all one as if it was cited, and to be so accounted; and since, if such a method is blameworthy, Christ, the Evangelists, and Apostles, must be blamed also, seeing they frequently use the same, which can never be allowed of: besides, supposing the clause omitted was added, he asks of what advantage it would be? since the two verses being connected together as they are, the sense with respect to God's providence and preservation, is clear enough and compleat: and I must confess, though I have pursued the above observation in the note on *Matt. iv. 6.* yet by comparing the Evangelists together, it is not a clear case to me, what Satan did leave out, or whether any thing at all; but it seems rather, that the words are put, as the Evangelists themselves thought fit to transcribe them, in which they are not exactly alike; more is left out by one, than by another; Matthew leaves out the whole clause, *to keep thee in all thy ways*; but Luke only omits these words, *in all thy ways*: but I am still of opinion, that the passage is applicable to Christ, as to any holy good man, yet it appears that Satan failed not, neither in the manner of citing it, nor in the application of it to Christ; but by wresting it to a wicked purpose, to countenance an action unwarrantable and criminal, being tempting of God; when the text only regards the preservation of good men in the way of duty, trusting in the Lord; and which is confirmed by the answer of Christ, who takes no notice of any faulty citation of the passage, or misapplication of it, as to his person; only suggests, by opposing another scripture to him, that what he had produced was to a wrong and wicked purpose; and to take it in his sense, would be to tempt God; see the note on *Matthew iv. 6.*

12 And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

In *Deut. vi. 16.* *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God*: in the text in *Deuteronomy* the words are, *Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God.* The second

(a) Biblos Katallages, p. 210, 211.

person plural is here changed into the second person singular, to accommodate the words to Satan; whom Christ singly addressees, and makes answer to, and who was under this same general law as other rational creatures: and Jehovah may be called the Lord his God, as he is his creator and governor; by whom he is upheld in his being, and to whom he is subject, whether he will or no; though not his covenant God: and even if our Lord Jesus Christ is intended by the Lord God, as some think; he is God over all; over all principalities and powers, good and bad, by whom all are created, and in whom all consist; and whose power and authority over Satan and his angels, have abundantly appeared, in dispossessing devils out of men, sending them where he pleased, and in spoiling the powers of darkness, and in destroying him that had the power of death, the devil; and great insolence and wickedness it must be in a creature, to tempt the Lord his God, in any way, or form whatever; see the note on *Matt. iv. 7.*

13 And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

Or all his temptations, as the Syriac version reads, not only the last mentioned, but all the rest, whether inward or outward, in a visible or in an invisible manner; whether during his forty days fast or after he was an hungered, when he had tried every way, and all sorts of temptations with him; and when he had done this, "in, or with all his power," as the Ethiopic version reads; when he had done his utmost, and his best; and as the Persian version adds, "and profited nothing;" could not succeed, or get any advantage over him:

He departed from him for a season] Till another opportunity should offer, or till that time should come, when would be the hour and power of darkness; and by means of one of his disciples, he should bruise his heel, and bring him to an accursed death; see *John xiv. 30. Luke xxii. 53.*

14 ¶ And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

The Spirit of which he was full, and by which he was led into the wilderness, and had combated with Satan, and had got the victory over him; and by virtue of which, he entered on his public ministry, wrought miracles, and taught with authority. A like way of speaking is used by the Targumist, on *Micah iii. 8.* I am filled, בתקופ רוח נבואה "with the power of the Spirit of prophecy, from before the Lord." Moreover, this phrase is used, to shew that his return into Galilee, where he had been brought up, and from whence he came to John

at Jordan, did not arise from a natural love to his country, and a fond desire of being there again; but was owing to the powerful impulse of the holy Spirit, which was in him, and moved him to return thither; where he was to begin his ministry, and work his miracles, and so fulfil a prophecy of him, in *Isai. ix. 1, 2.* see *Matt. iv. 12—16.*

And there went out a fame of him through all the region round about] Throughout all Galilee and Syria, Decapolis and Judea; see *Matt. iv. 23—25.* the report of his doctrines and miracles, was spread far and near; and on account of them he became the subject of the common talk of people every where, who highly applauded and commended him for them.

15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

In the public places of worship used by the Galileans, where they met on sabbath-days and weekdays, to read and pray, and hear the scriptures expounded; and Christ engaging here as a public teacher, was the reason of his fame being spread around the country:

Being glorified of all] That heard him: they were astonished at his doctrine; they wondered at his gracious words; they praised him as a preacher; and glorified him, and God for him, because of the mighty works which were done by him.

16 ¶ And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as the custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath-day, and stood up for to read.

After some length of time, when he had gone through all Galilee, and had acquired great credit and reputation by his ministry and miracles; he came to the place,

Where he had been brought up] Where he was conceived, though not born; and where he had his education, and wrought at a trade, and was well known to the inhabitants; and therefore it was proper that he should first exercise his ministry and obtain a character in other places, which would prepare him a reception among his townsmen, who otherwise, in all likelihood, would have treated him at once with neglect and contempt:

And as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath-day] This was either his custom from his youth, when he dwelt at Nazareth, while a private person, and before he was engaged in public service, whither he had used to repair as an inhabitant of the city, and a member of the congregation, to attend synagogue-worship, as he now did; or it refers to his custom since he became a public preacher who, at Capernaum, or any other

other city of Galilee, where there was a synagogue, used to frequent it, whether on sabbath-days, or any other, and so he did here :

And stood up for to read] By rising and standing up, and perhaps by some other gesture, he signified his inclination to read a portion of scripture, if liberty was given, and a book delivered him, for, as yet, he had no book to read in ; nor might any read in public, unless he had an order from the congregation, or the chief of it ; for so runs the Jewish canon (b) : " A reader may not read until " the chief of the congregation bids him read ; " yea, even a minister of the congregation, or a " ruler of the synagogue, may not read of him- " self, until the congregation, or the chief among " them, bids him read." This custom of reading the scriptures publicly, was an appointment of Moses, according to the account of the Jews ; who say (c), " Moses our master, ordered the Israelites to read in the law publicly, on the sabbath, and on the second and fifth days of the week, in the morning ; so that they might not " be three days without hearing the law : and Ezra " ordered, that they should read so at the evening " sacrifice, every sabbath, on account of those that " sit in the corners of streets ; and also he ordered, " that three men should read on the second and " fifth days of the week, and that they should not " read less than twenty verses." It was also the custom to stand at reading the law and the prophets : with regard to the book of *Esther*, the rule is (d) this ; " He that reads the *Megilla*, or book of " *Esther*, stands or sits." That is, as their commentators (e) explain it, if he will he may stand, and if he will he may sit, he may do as he pleases ; but so he might not in reading the law : hence it is asked (f), " Why is it not so in the law ? R. Abhu " replies, Because the scripture says, *Deut. v. 3.* " *Stand thou here by me.*" Wherefore they say (g), the law must be read standing, and it is even forbidden to lean on any thing. Christ conformed to these rules ; he went into the synagogue to read on the sabbath-day, and *stood up* when he read, and waited for order, and a book to be given him to read : it may be asked, How he came to be admitted to read publicly in the synagogue, when he was not of the tribe of Levi, nor was he brought up in the schools and academies of the Jews, and was known to be a mechanic ? It may be observed, that common Israelites, as well as priests and Levites, were allowed to read the scriptures publicly ; every sabbath-day, seven persons read, a priest, a Levite, and five Israelites : the order was this ; the priest

read first, and after him the Levite, and after him an Israelite : and it is said to be a known custom to this day, that even an unlearned priest read before the greatest wise man in Israel ; and he that was greater than his companion in wisdom, read first (h). Now Christ, on account of the great fame he was in for his wisdom and mighty works, was admitted to this public service, though he was no Levite, and known by the inhabitants of this place to have been brought up to a trade.

17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet *Esaïas*. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

Delivered by the *Chazan*, or minister, to whom he gave it again, *ψ. 20.* for the *Chazan* of the synagogue, was, *www* " the minister (i) ;" one part of whose business was, to deliver the book of the law to, and take it from him that read : when an high priest read, the method taken was this (k) ; " The " *Chazan*, or minister of the synagogue, took the " book of the law, and gave it to the ruler of the " synagogue, and the ruler of the synagogue gave " it to the *Sagan*, and the *Sagan* gave it to the " high priest, and the high priest stood and received, and read *standing*." The same method was observed, when a king read in the book of the law (l) ; but when a common priest, or an inferior person read, so much ceremony was not used, as to hand the book from one to another : the manner in their synagogues and schools, was this (m) ; " The *Chazan* brought out the book of the law, " and the priest read, and after him a Levite ; " then the *Chazan* of the synagogue, brought the " book of the law down to the head of the captivity, and all the people stood ; and he took the " book of the law into his hands, and *stood* and " read in it ; and the heads of the schools stood " with him, and the head of the university of Sora " interpreted it ; and returned the book of the " law to the *Chazan*, and he returned it to the " chest." That part of the sacred volume which was delivered unto Jesus at this time, was

The book of the prophet Esaïas] It is very likely, that the lesson out of the prophets for that day, was to be read out of the prophecy of *Isaiah* ; and it seems probable, that it was the single book of *Isaiah*, or that prophecy rolled up by itself, in one volume, that was delivered to Christ ; as the law was divided into five parts, each fifth part was sometimes

(b) Maimon. Hilchot Tephilla, c. 12. §. 7. (c) Ibid. §. 1.

(d) Misn. Megilla, c. 4. 1. (e) Jarchi & Bartenora in ibid.

(f) T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 21. 1. (g) Rabbeu Ather in

T. Megill. c. 3. §. 1. & Piske Harosh in ibid.

(h) Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 12. §. 16, 18. (i) Jarchi & Bartenora in Misn. Sota, c. 7. §. 7. & Yoma, c. 7. 1.

(k) Misn. Yoma, c. 7. §. 1. Maimon. Yom Haccipurim, c. 3. §. 10. (l) Misn. Sota, c. 7. §. 8.

(m) Juchasin, fol. 123. 1.

sometimes in a book, or volume by itself: hence a fifth part of the law, is by the Jews interpreted (*n*), ספר "a book of the law," in which there is but one fifth part; so might the prophets be in separate and distinct books, and it looks as if they sometimes were, by the following account (*o*): "A man may join together the law, the prophets, and the holy writings, as one; the words of R. Meir. R. Juda says, The law by itself, the prophets by themselves, and the holy writings by themselves; and the wise men say, Each by themselves (that is, each book by itself.) And, says R. Judah, it happened to Baithus ben Zumin, that he had eight prophets joined together as one; and there are that say, that he had not, but, אחר אחר בפני עצמו "but every one by itself."

And when he had opened the book] Or unrolled it, for books formerly were written in rolls of paper and parchment; and in this form is the book of the law with the Jews, in their synagogues, to this day: "All books they say (*p*), are rolled from the beginning to the end of them, but the book of the law is rolled to the middle of it, and a pillar, or column, is made for it here and there; says R. Eliezer with R. Zadok, so the writers of books in Jerusalem made their books: the Rabbins teach, That they do not make the book of the law its length more than its circumference, nor its circumference more than its length." Such a roll, or volume, of the prophet Isaiah, Christ unrolled, till he came to the place he intended to read: it is a rule with the Jews (*q*), that "They do not unroll the book of the law in the congregation, because of the glory of the congregation." It may therefore be asked, whether Christ did not break this rule, since he unrolled the book that was given him, publicly in the synagogue? To which it may be replied, "That it was lawful to unroll the book of the prophets, which was what Christ did, but not the law; for so runs another of their rules (*r*), "They skip in the prophets, but not in the law, because, שגוללין נביא ברבים "that they unroll a prophet publicly," but they do not unroll the law publicly." Christ having thus unrolled the volume of the prophet Isaiah, which was put into his hands by the Chazan or minister,

He found the place where it was written] As is expressed in the following verse, and which is to be seen in *Isaiah* lxi. 1. and which was either the lesson of the day, or what Christ particularly

sought for, and looked out; or was providentially directed to, as what was pertinent to himself, and proper to read and insist on at this time; for it was not by chance that he hit on this place, and read it, but it was according to purpose, and with design. Before the reading of the prophets, a blessing used to be said, which was in this form (*s*): "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, who hath chosen the good prophets, and art well pleased with their words, which are said in truth; blessed art thou, O Lord, who hast chosen the law, Moses his servant, and Israel his people, and the prophets of truth and righteousness." Whether this was delivered by Christ, is not certain; however, he read the following passage.

18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

By the Spirit is meant, the third person in the Trinity; so called, to distinguish him from all other spirits; and who was given to Christ, as man, without measure, whereby he was qualified for his great work: and intends the Spirit of Jehovah, with all his gifts and graces, who was in and abode on Christ, as a Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, of counsel and of might, or knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord; he was upon him, and in him, the first moment of his conception, which was by his power; and he visibly descended on him at his baptism; and the phrase denotes the permanency and continuance of him with Christ:

Because he hath anointed me] Or, "that he might anoint me:" the Ethiopic version renders it, "by whom he hath anointed me;" for it was with the Holy Ghost he was anointed, as to be king and priest, so likewise to be a prophet: hence he has the name Messiah, which signifies anointed: and this unction he had, in order

To preach the Gospel to the poor] In Isaiah it is, *to the meek*; which design the same persons, and mean such as are poor in spirit, and are sensible of their spiritual poverty; have low and humble thoughts of themselves, and of their own righteousness; and seek to Christ for durable riches and true righteousness, and frankly acknowledge that all they have and are is owing to the grace of God: and, generally speaking, these are the poor of this world,

(*n*) Gloss. in T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 27. 1.

Bava Bathra, fol. 13. 2. & Massechet Sopherim, c. 3. §. 1, 5.

(*p*) T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 14. 1.

(*q*) T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 70. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 12. §. 23.

(*r*) Massechet Sopherim, c. 11. §. 2.

(*o*) T. Bab.

(*s*) Seder Tephillot, fol. 127. 2. Ed. Basil.

world, and poor in their intellectuals, who have but a small degree of natural wisdom and knowledge: to these the Gospel, or glad tidings of the love, grace, and mercy of God in Christ, of peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation by Christ, were preached by him; and that in so clear a manner, and with such power and authority, as never was before, or since; and for this purpose was he *anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows*:

He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted] Whose hearts are broken, and made contrite by the word of God, under the influence of the Spirit of God, and with a sense of sin; and are wounded with it, and are humbled for it; and are in great pain and distress, and even inconsolable, and ready to faint and die; for *a wounded spirit who can bear?* Now Christ was sent to heal such persons by his own stripes, by binding up their wounds, by the application of his blood to them, which is a sovereign balm for every wound; by the discoveries of pardoning grace to their souls, and by opening and applying the comfortable promises of the Gospel, by his Spirit, to them:

To preach deliverance to the captives] Who are captives to sin, Satan, and the law; from which, there is only deliverance by him; who saves his people from their sins, redeems them from the law, and leads captivity captive: and which liberty and deliverance are preached and published in the Gospel, and by Christ the author of them:

And recovering of sight to the blind] Which in the prophet is, *and the opening of the prison to them that are bound*; and which the Septuagint render, as here in Luke, and the Chaldee paraphrase in part agrees with it, interpreting it thus, "to the prisoners, *אחורלו לנהור*" "be ye revealed to the light:" now because persons in prison are in darkness, and see no light, therefore they are represented as blind; and both are the case of sinners, they are in the prison of sin and of the law, and are blind, ignorant, and insensible of their state; until Christ both opens the prison, and sets them free, and opens their eyes, and gives them spiritual sight; when he says *to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves*, Isaiah xlix. 9.

To set at liberty them that are bruised] These words are not in *Isaiah* lxi. 1. but in the Septuagint version of *Isaiah* lviii. 6. from whence they seem to be taken, or else from *Isaiah* xlii. 7. it being allowable for a reader in the prophets, to skip from place to place, which our Lord here did, in order to explain this passage more fully.

19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

The time which he willed and fixed for the re-

demption of his people, and in which he shewed his good-will and pleasure unto sinful men, in the gift of his Son to them, and for them; and which, as the Arabic and Syriac versions render it, was *a time acceptable to the Lord*: the sufferings of Christ were according to his will; his sacrifice was of a sweet smelling savour to him; his righteousness he was well pleased with; and the satisfaction and atonement for sin he made, was a plenary and complete one: all Christ did, and suffered, were grateful to God, because hereby his perfections were glorified, his purposes, counsel, and covenant were accomplished, and his people saved. The Perfic version renders it, "to preach the law acceptable to God;" neither agreeable to the original text, nor its sense; for Christ was sent to preach the Gospel, and not the law. In the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions is added, "and the day of vengeance," out of the prophecy in *Isai.* lxi. 2. but is not in any of the copies, or other versions. Our Lord did not read through all the three verses in the prophet, as it might be thought he would, and which was agreeable to the Jewish canon (r): "He that reads in the law may not read less than three verses, and he may not read to an interpreter more than one verse, and in a prophet three; and if those three are three sections, they read every one; they skip in a prophet, but they do not skip in the law." This last our Lord did, though he did not strictly attend to the former. Indeed, their rule, as elsewhere (u) given, obliged to read one and twenty verses; but this was not always observed: "For if on a sabbath-day there was an interpreter, or a preacher, they read in a prophet three verses, or five, or seven, and were not solicitous about twenty and one (x)."

20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

Or rolled it up; and so the high priest did, after he read in the book of the law, on the day of atonement, all that was necessary to be read, *ספר תורה* גולל "he rolled the book of the law," and put it in his bosom (y):

And he gave it again to the minister] The Chazan (z), who was the minister, or servant of the congregation, who had the affairs of it upon him, to let in, and bring out, and to order all things; and particularly to take care of the book of the law, and the chest or ark in which it was. If the same

(r) Misn. Megilla, c. 4. §. 4. Massechet Sopherim, c. 11. §. 1.

(u) Peske Harosh Megilla, c. 3. art. 6. (x) Massechet Sopherim, c. 12. §. 7. (y) Misn. Yoma, c. 7. §. 1.

(z) Bartenora in Misn. Sota, c. 7. §. 7.

same rule was observed in giving and taking the book of any prophet, as the book of the law; then Christ gave it to the minister, and he received it with his right hand: for so it is said (a), "He that gives the book of the law to his friend, may not give it but with the right hand; and he that receives it, may not receive it but with the right hand; for so was the giving of it on mount Sinai, according to Deut. xxxiii. 2."

And sat down] As was the manner of the Jews when they taught, or preached; see the note on Matt. v. 1.

And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him] They looked very wisely at him, and were very attentive to what he should say upon such a passage of scripture, which they knew referred to the Messiah; and the rather, as they had known him formerly, and had heard that he was said to be the Messiah.

21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

Began to preach from those words; the explanation of which he gave, though not here recorded, and applied them to himself, to whom they belonged, saying:

This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears] Which is, as if he should say, "I am the person here spoken of; and at this present time the Spirit of God is upon me; I am anointed with the Holy Ghost, and now preach glad tidings to you, and all the good things here mentioned, and for the several ends proposed; and this scripture has its full accomplishment which has been read unto you, and you have heard this day." So the Syriac version renders it, רבא דניכון "which is in your ears;" that is, which you have now heard. The Jews themselves acknowledge, that these words are spoken of the Messiah. One of their writers (b) says, "These are the words of the prophet, 'with respect to the Messiah; for the Messiah shall say so, because the Lord hath anointed me,' &c. And so said the true Messiah Jesus. Another of them expresses himself thus (c): "These are the words of the prophet with respect to the Messiah; for the Messiah shall say thus, because the Lord hath anointed me, &c. Or they are the words of the prophet concerning himself." And elsewhere it is said by them (d), "The holy, blessed God will send his Messiah to us, and he shall be worthy of this, (that is, the character of a meek person) as it is said, Isaiah lxi. 1. He hath sent me to preach glad tidings to the meek."

22 And all bare him witness, and won-

dered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

That he was right in applying the words to the Messiah; but not that he himself was the Messiah, and that he was right in applying them to himself; for they did not believe in him, as appears from what follows:

And wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth] Or "words of grace(e)," חן רבא not so much at the matter, the sum, and substance of them, as expressive of the love, grace, and favour of God, shewn in the mission and unction of the Messiah, and in that liberty, deliverance, and salvation he was sent to effect and proclaim; as at the graceful manner in which he delivered himself, and the aptness of his words, the propriety of his diction, and the majesty, power, and authority, with which his expressions were clothed; and they were more amazed at all this, since they knew his parentage and education, and in what manner he had been brought up among them; and therefore it was astonishing to them, where he had his learning, knowledge, and wisdom:

And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?] The carpenter, and who was brought up by him to his trade, and never learned letters; from whom had he this doctrine? Of whom has he learned this way of address, and to speak with so much eloquence and propriety, since his education was so mean, and he has never been at the feet of any of the doctors, or has been brought up in any of the academies and schools of learning?

23 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.

Or *parable*; for any pithy sentence, or proverbial expression, was by the Jews called a parable:

Physician, heal thyself] And which was a proverb in use with the Jews; and which is sometimes expressed thus, הילא אסי נפשיך "go heal thyself(f);" and sometimes in this form, אסיא אסי חגרתך "physician, heal thy lameness(g):" the meaning of which is, that a man ought to look at home, and take care of himself, and of those that belonged to him. And Christ was aware that his townsmen would object this to him, that if he was the person he was said to be, and could do the miracles and cures which were ascribed to him, he ought to do something of this kind at home, among them, who

(a) Massechet Sopherim, c. 3. §. 10.

(b) Kimchi in Sepher Shorash. rad. משורש

(c) R. Sol. Hamelec in Mischle

lol Yophi in loc.

(d) Juchasin, fol. 69. 1.

(e) Kimchi in P's. 45. 2.

(f) Zohar in Exod. fol. 31. 2.

(g) Bereshit Rabba, §. 23. fol. 20. 4.

who were his townsmen, neighbours, relations, and acquaintance; that is, heal their sick, lame, blind, leprous, deaf, and dumb: and that this is the sense of it, is manifest from what follows,

Whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum] A place where Christ often was, and where he cured the centurion's servant of the palsy, and Peter's wife's mother of a fever, and another man sick of a palsy, and the woman of her bloody issue, and a man that had a withered hand, and where he raised Jairus's daughter from the dead:

Do also here in thy country] Or *city*, as the Syriac, Arabic, Persian, and Ethiopic versions render it. Hence it appears, that this was not the first of our Lord's ministry; he had preached elsewhere, and wrought miracles before he came to Nazareth, and of which his townsmen had heard; and therefore were desirous that he would do the like among them, if he was able; for they seem to be very incredulous, and to question the reports of him, and his ability to perform such things; however, if he could, they thought they had as good a right to his favours and benefits as any, this being his native place.

24. And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.

Another proverb in use among them, the meaning of which was well known to them, and was very apposite to the present case:

No prophet is accepted in his own country] See the note on *Matt. xiii. 57*.

25 But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

Or in truth; it answers to *באמת* a phrase often used by the Jewish writers (*b*); and which they say (*i*), wherever, and of whatever it is spoken, it signifies a tradition of Moses from mount Sinai, and so that which is most true, sure, and firm, and to be depended on; and such is what our Lord hereafter delivers; yea, the word, *האמת* "truth, or of a truth," and which is the same as *in truth*, is used by the Jews (*k*), as *שבועה לשון* "the form of an oath:" so that these words of Christ are a strong asseveration, and amount to a solemn oath with respect to what follows:

Many widows were in Israel in the days Elias] Or *Elijah the prophet*; that is, there were many that

(b) *Mish. Sabbat*, c. 1. §. 3. *Trumot*, c. 2. §. 1.

(i) *T. Hieros. Sabbat*, fol. 3. 2. & 12. 3. *Maimon*, & *Bartenora* in *Mish. Trumot*, c. 3. §. 1.

(k) *T. Bab. Beracot*, fol. 55. 1. & *Gloss*, in *ibid*.

were not only widows, but poor widows, and in very famishing circumstances in the land of Israel, when Elijah was the prophet of the Lord to that people:

When the heaven was shut up three years and six months] So that no rain descended all that time: the same is observed by James, chapter v. 17. and though the space of time, in which there was no rain, is not so clear from the history of it in the book of Kings; yet, as this is fixed by Christ, and his Apostle, and there is nothing in the history that contradicts it, it is to be received without scruple:

When great famine was throughout all the land] Of Israel, and which so long a drought must needs bring.

26 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

That is, to none of the poor widows in the land of Israel was the prophet sent, to supply them with food, and relieve them in their famishing circumstances, as might most reasonably have been expected,

Save of Sarepta, a city of Sidon] Which in *1 Kings xvii. 10.* is called *Zarephath*; and by the Septuagint there, *Sarepta* of Sidon, as here. Pliny (*l*) speaks of it by the same name, and reckons it to Sidon:

Unto a woman that was a widow] She is said, by the Jews (*m*), to be the mother of Jonah the prophet. Our Lord meant to observe, by this instance, as by the following, that God bestows his favours on persons in a sovereign way, and sometimes upon the most unlikely; as in a time of famine, he overlooked the poor widows in Israel, his peculiar people, and sent his prophet to a Gentile woman, in one of the cities of Sidon: and therefore they should cease to wonder if he wrought his miracles in other places, and not in his own country; since this was agreeable to the divine procedure in other cases, especially since they were a cavilling and unbelieving people. The Jews say (*n*), that in all that generation there was not found any one who was worthy, as this woman.

27 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

The leprosy was a disease very common among the Jews; hence those laws concerning it in *Lev.*

(l) *L. 5. c. 19.*

(m) *Pirke Eliez. r. c. 33.*

(n) *Zohar in Exod*, fol. 89. 2.

Lev. xiii. and *xiv.* and it seems by this account, that it was very prevalent,

In the time of Eliseus the prophet] That is, the prophet Elisha; who, by the Septuagint, in *1 Kings xix. 16.* and, in other places, is called *Elisæus*.

And none of them was cleansed] From their leprosy, by any direction of the prophet,

Saving Naaman the Syrian] Or but Naaman, who was not an Israelite, but a Syrian: he was cleansed and cured of his leprosy, being ordered by Elisha to dip himself seven times in Jordan, which he did, and was healed, *2 Kings v. 14.*

28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

The ruler and minister, and the whole multitude of the common people that were met together there for worship; and who before were amazed at his eloquence, and the gracefulness of his delivery; and could not but approve of his ministry, though they could not account for it, how he should come by his qualifications for it:

When they heard those things] These two instances of Elijah and Elisha, the one supplying the wants of a Sidonian woman, and the other healing a Syrian leper, when no notice was taken by them of poor widows and lepers in Israel.

Were filled with wrath] For by these instances they perceived, that they were compared to the Israelites in the times of wicked Ahab and Jezebel; and that no miracles were to be wrought among them, or benefits conferred on them, though they were his townsmen; yea, that the Gentiles were preferred unto them; and indeed, the calling of the Gentiles was here plainly intimated, which was always ungrateful and provoking to the Jews; and it was suggested, that the favours of God, and grace of the Messiah, are dispensed in a sovereign and discriminating way; than which nothing is more offensive to carnal minds.

29 And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

Rose in great wrath, and in a noisy and tumultuous manner, before the service was well over, and without being regularly dismissed:

And thrust him out of the city] First out of the synagogue, and then out of their city, as unworthy to be in it, though an inhabitant of it; and as if he had done something deserving of death, and therefore to be punished as a malefactor without the city:

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And led him unto the brow of the hill] The edge of it, where it run out, and hung over the precipice:

Whereon their city was built] Now a small village in Galilee, seated in a little vale between two hills (a); so that it was a city upon an hill, and very visible, to which Christ may allude in *Matt. v. 14.*

That they might cast him down headlong] And break him to pieces: in this manner ten thousand Edomites were destroyed by the Jews, in the times of Amaziah, *2 Chron. xxv. 12.* though this was not an usual way with the Jews of putting persons to death, as with some other nations (p): their four capital punishments were stoning, strangling, burning, and killing with the sword (q): nor did the inhabitants of Nazareth proceed in any judicial manner with Christ, but hurried him away, in order to destroy him, without any formal process, in the manner the zealots did: though to put any man to death, or to inflict any punishment on a person on the sabbath-day, as this was, was contrary to their own canon, which runs thus (r): "They do not inflict punishment on the sabbath-day, even though it is the punishment of an affirmative precept; they do not beat one that is guilty, nor put to death, as it is said, *Exod. xxiv. 3. Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath-day.*" This is a caution to the Sanhedrim, that they do not burn on the sabbath-day he that is condemned to burning; and "this is the law with respect to any one that is liable to the other punishments." But these men, without any regard to the place where they were, and the worship they were concerned in, and the day of the sabbath, which then was, rise up in great wrath and fury, and without any shew of justice, and in the most brutish and barbarous manner, attempt to take away the life of Christ.

30 But he passing through the midst of them went his way.

Either in so strong and powerful a manner, and with so much swiftness, that being once out of their hands, they could not lay hold on him again, or else he put on another form, or made himself invisible to them; or he held their eyes that they could not see him, or know him, as in *Luke xxiv. 16.* however it was, he made use of, and shewed his divine power, and which he did, because his time to die was not yet come, nor was he to die such a death, and this also shews, that when he did die, he laid down his life freely and voluntarily, since he could then have exerted his power,

(a) Sandy's Travels, 1. 3. p. 150.

(p) Capitol. Rom. c. 4.

(r) Moses Kottin's Mitzvot. For, pr. sig. 67.

(q) Vid. Ruyssch. de:

(r) Misa. Sanhedrim, c. 7. §. 1.

and delivered himself out of the hands of his enemies, as now:

And went his way] From Nazareth, elsewhere; nor do we read of his returning there any more.

31 And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath-days.

Which was, as Dr Lightfoot thinks, sixteen miles or more from Nazareth; and Christ may be said to *come down* to it, because of the situation of Nazareth, which was upon an hill.

A city of Galilee] Of lower Galilee, near the sea of Galilee:

And taught them on the sabbath-days] That is, he went into the synagogue at Capernaum, on the sabbath-days, whenever he was there, and taught the inhabitants, explained some passage or other in the Old Testament, as he had done at Nazareth, and instructed them in the doctrines of the Gospel.

32 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.

At the matter of it, as well as the manner in which it was delivered, it being so different from the scribes and Pharisees, they had been used to:

For his word was with power] He spake with great fervency, majesty, and authority, and not with coldness and indifference, and dependence on the sense and authority of others, as their teachers did; and besides, such power went along with the word, that it reached their hearts; and as the Perfic version renders it, "he penetrated them with it;" and he also confirmed it by powerful operations, by miraculous works, such as casting out devils, and healing diseases, of which an account follows.

33 ¶ And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice,

That is, in the synagogue at Capernaum, as Christ was there teaching, on one of the sabbath-days beforementioned; there was a certain man,

Which had a spirit of an unclean devil] Who was possessed with the devil, who is by nature and practice unclean; and was filled with the spirit of the devil, with a spirit of divination, and was acted by him, to impose upon the people; he influenced his mind as an enthusiast, as well as possessed his body: and this was on the sabbath-day; whereas the Jews say (1), "That Satan and the evil demon, flee on the sabbath-day to the mountains of darkness, and do not appear all the sabbath-day, because that day is holy, and they are un-

(1) Moses Kotsenke Mitsvot Tor., p. 111, 112.

"clean; but in the evening of the sabbath, they prepare themselves, and meet the children of men, and hurt them."

And cried out with a loud voice] See the note on Mark i. 23.

34 Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God.

Not that there were more spirits in him than one, as the whole account shews; but he includes the rest of the devils in that country; see the note on Mark i. 24.

35 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not.

Not the man, but the unclean spirit; or "that daemon," as the Perfic version reads it:

Saying, Hold thy peace] Or, *be thou muzzled*, as the word signifies, *and came out of him*; see the note on Matthew i. 25.

And when the devil had thrown him in the midst] "In the midst of them," as the Arabic version adds; that is, in the midst of the people that were in the synagogue; or, as the Ethiopic version reads, "in the midst of the synagogue," where he threw him into convulsive fits, and left him:

He came out of him, and hurt him not] Though he sadly convulsed him, and put him to great pain, yet he did not wound him in any part of his body, or take away the use of any of his limbs; and much less hurt his soul, so as to destroy it; all which was desired and intended by him, but was hindered by Christ; see the note on Mark i. 26.

36 And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.

The people in the synagogue; they were astonished at his doctrine before, and now at his miracles:

And spake among themselves] As they were in the synagogue,

What a word is this] Meaning, either what sort of doctrine is this which is attended with such power and miracles; or what a word of command is this,

Hold thy peace, and come out of him?] And so the Ethiopic version renders it, "what is this man's datory,"

“datory, or commanding word?” To which agrees the Syriac version, rendering it with the following clause thus; “What is this word, that with authority and power it commands the unclean spirits, and they come out?” See the note on *Mark* i. 27.

37 And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about.

From hence, on account of his dispossessing this unclean spirit, which seems to be the first instance of this kind:

Into every place of the country round about] Into every city, town, and village in Galilee, and even into all places round about Galilee; see *Mark* i. 28.

38 ¶ And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon’s house. And Simon’s wife’s mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her.

That is, when he had dispossessed the unclean spirit, he rose up, and went out of the synagogue:

And entered into Simon’s house] The house of Simon Peter, and which was also Andrew’s; and in Beza’s ancient copy, and in one of Stephens’s, it is added, “and of Andrew;” who, though they were both natives of Bethsaida, yet, it seems, had an house at Capernaum, whither Christ went of his own accord, or by an invitation given him:

And Simon’s wife’s mother was taken with a great fever] The Vulgate Latin version reads, “with great fevers.” “The fever is a disease, or rather class of diseases, whose characteristic is a preternatural heat felt through the whole body, or, at least, the principal parts thereof, attended with other symptoms, &c (†).” The fever Peter’s wife’s mother lay ill of, is said to be a great one; which circumstance is the rather mentioned, to illustrate the miraculous cure of it by Christ; see the note on *Matt.* viii. 14.

And they besought him for her] Either his disciples, Peter, Andrew, James, and John, who were all present, or the other relations and friends of the sick person, which were in the house; who having heard of his casting out the unclean spirit in the synagogue, believed that he had power to heal this disease; and therefore intreat him, for her sake, and upon her account, that he would restore her health.

39 And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.

“At her head,” as the Persic version reads: he

inclined himself towards her, to see how she did, and to take her by the hand, and lift her up;

And rebuked the fever] The Syriac and Persic versions read, “her fever,” that which was upon her:

And it left her] As Mark says, immediately; as soon as ever he had touched her hand, and rebuked the fever, and bid it be gone:

And immediately she arose and ministered unto them] See the note on *Matthew* viii. 15.

40 ¶ Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.

When the sabbath was over; see the note on *Matthew* viii. 16.

All they that had any sick, with divers diseases, brought them unto him] That is, as many of the inhabitants of Capernaum as had sick persons in their houses, let their diseases be what they would, brought them to Christ in Simon’s house; which, sabbath being over, they might do consistent with their laws, and the traditions of the elders, and without any just offence to the scribes and Pharisees, who were tenacious of them; and they were encouraged to do so, partly through the dispossessing the unclean spirit in their synagogue that day, which many of them had been witnesses of; and partly through the cure of Peter’s wife’s mother, which they had heard of:

And he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them] Without the use of medicine, by the mere imposition of his hands; which was accompanied with such power and virtue from him, as to remove, at once, every disease; nor did he refuse any person, how unworthy soever they might be in themselves, and however obstinate their disease might be.

41 ¶ And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.

Not willingly, nor of themselves, but at the word and command of Christ, who ordered them to depart:

Crying out, and saying] As they test the bodies of men, and not with any good-will to Christ:

Thou art Christ] The true Messiah, that was of old promised and prophesied of, and has been long expected to come:

The Son of God] The only-begotten Son of God, possessed of the same perfections with God his Father;

(†) See Chambers’s Cyclopædia in the word *fever*.

ther; and particularly of almighty power, of which they were convinced by his dispossessing them:

And he rebuking them suffered them not to speak] For he needed not their testimony, nor did he choose to be made known by them:

For they knew that he was Christ] Or, "that they knew that he was Christ;" to the Syriac version: they certainly did know that he was the Messiah, partly by the voice from heaven at his baptism, and partly by his power over them: but Christ would not suffer them to say that he was the Messiah, or that they knew him to be so; either because the time was not come for such a declaration to be made, or they were not the proper persons to make it; and lest such a publication, by them, should be made a handle of by the scribes and Pharisees, to say that he had society with devils, and by them cast the evil spirits out.

42 ¶ And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them.

"The day after," as the Persic version renders it; "at the dawning, or break of day," as the Syriac; he rose a great while before it was day, as Mark says, chap. i. 35. but did not go out till it was day, or till day was coming on, when

He departed] From Peter's house, and from Capernaum:

And went into a desert place] For the sake of solitude, that he might be retired from company, and have an opportunity of privately praying to God:

And the people sought, and came unto him] They first went to Simon's house, and not finding him there, sought for him elsewhere: and when they understood where he was, they came to him,

And stayed him that he should not depart from them] They laid hold on him, and held him, and did all they could to persuade him to abide with them constantly, and not think of removing from them: though perhaps this was not so much from love to Christ's person and presence, or any regard to his ministry, and the good and welfare of their immortal souls, as on account of the miracles he wrought, and the corporal benefits he bestowed on them.

43. And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.

In answer to their importunate requests:

I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also] As well as to Capernaum; and though they did

not express their desire of his continuance with them, in order to preach the Gospel to them; yet Christ signifies, that a principal part of his work lay in preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, the Gospel - dispensation on earth, the doctrines and ordinances of it, as well as the things which relate to the kingdom of glory; as what is the saints' meetness for it, their regeneration, and their right unto it, which lies in his righteousness; and that as he had preached these things at Capernaum, there was a necessity upon him to preach them in other cities of Galilee and Judea:

For therefore am I sent] As he was by his heavenly Father, and had himself also undertook and engaged to do it.

44 And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

In the several synagogues that were in different cities and towns throughout all Galilee.

CHAP. V.

In this chapter we have Christ preaching out of Peter's ship, v. 1—3. The miraculous draught of fishes; Christ promiseth to make his disciples fishers of men, v. 4—10. They leave all and follow him, v. 11, 12. He cleanseth a leper, v. 13—16. The lawyers come to hear the doctrine of Christ, v. 17. He cureth the man sick of the palsy, v. 18—20. whereby he proveth his authority to forgive sins, v. 21—26. He calleth Levi the publican, v. 27. who leaveth all to follow him, v. 28. Levi's feast, wherein Christ eateth with publicans, v. 29. wherefore the Pharisees murmur, v. 30. He vindicateth his so doing, v. 31, 32. and justifies his disciples in not fasting so frequently as the disciples of John and the Pharisees did, v. 33—39.

1 AND it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Genesareth,

As Christ went through Galilee, and preached in the synagogues there, great crouds of people attended on him, and they followed him wherever he went; and so large were their numbers, and so very eager were they to see him, and hear him, that they were even troublesome to him, and bore hard upon him, and were ready to press him down, though they had no ill design upon him, but only

To hear the word of God] The scriptures of the Old Testament explained, and the doctrines of the Gospel preached; and which were preached by him, as never were before or since, and in such a manner

manner as were not by the scribes and Pharisees; and both the matter and manner of his ministry drew a vast concourse of people after him:

He stood by the lake of Gennesareth] The same with the sea of Chinnereth, Numb. xxxiv. 11. *Josbua* xii. 3. and chap. xiii. 27. where the Targums of Onkelos, Jonathan, and the Jerusalem, call it, גֶּנֶזֶר דִּנְיָר, "the sea of Genusar, or Gennesareth:" and so it is elsewhere called (a), and is the same which is called the sea of Galilee, and of Tiberias, John vi. 1. and chap. xxi. 1. and is, by other writers (b), as here, called the lake of Gennesareth, and said to be sixteen miles long, and six broad. Josephus says (c), it is forty furlongs broad, and an hundred long. The Jews says (d), "That the holy, "blessed God created seven seas, but chose none "of them all, but the sea of Gennesareth." And indeed, it was a place chosen by Christ, and honoured, and made famous by him, by his preaching at it, his miracles upon it, and shewing himself there after his resurrection.

2 And saw two ships standing by the lake; but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets.

Or two fishing-boats; which were, as the Arabic version renders it, "detained by anchors at "the shore of the lake;" the one belonging to Peter and Andrew, and the other to Zebedee and his two sons, James and John;

But the fishermen were gone out of them] That is, either the above persons, or their servants:

And were washing their nets] On shore; they having gathered a great deal of soil and filthiness, but had caught no fish; and therefore were cleansing their nets, in order to lay them up, finding it to be in vain to make any further attempts with them at present; and which considered, makes the following miracle the more illustrious.

3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.

Simon Peter's, and Andrew his brother's, who were both together at this time, though the last is not here mentioned.

And prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land] As Simon was the owner of the vessel, Christ desired him; he asked the favour of him to put off a little way from shore; though the

Arabic and Ethiopic versions render it, "he commanded him," being his Lord and Master. To which the Syriac and Persian versions agree; only they make the orders to be given, not to Simon singly but to others, to all in the boat; the former rendering it, "and he said," or ordered, "that they "should carry him a little way from the dry land "to the waters;" and the latter thus, "and said, "Carry ye the ship from dry land a little into the "sea." And which adds, agreeable to the sense enough, though it is not in the text, "when they "had executed his command;" had done as he intreated, or ordered, and put off the vessel a little way from the shore:

He sat down and taught the people out of the ship] For the boat was not carried either out of sight, or beyond the hearing of the people: this method Christ took at another time, and that for convenience, as now; see *Matt.* xiii. 1—3. and where as he sat while he taught, this was according to the then custom of the times with the Jews; see the note on *Matt.* v. 1.

4 ¶ Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

Left teaching the people, and preaching the word of God unto them out of the ship, as they stood on the shore before him.

He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep] He spoke to Simon Peter, being the master of the vessel, to thrust it out, or put it off further into deep water, more convenient for fishing;

And let down your nets for a draught] Of fishes: his meaning is, that he would give orders to his servants, to put out the vessel to sea, to take their nets and cast them into the sea, in order to take and draw up a quantity of fish, which was their business.

5 And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

Or Rabbi, as the Syriac version renders it: he knew him to be the Messiah, the king of Israel, and a teacher sent from God:

We have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing] Which carries in it an objection to what Christ advised and directed to: they had been fishing that night, which was the best time for catching fish; and they had been at it all the night, and had laboured hard; and were even fatigued, and quite wearied out, and what was most discouraging of all, their labour was in vain; they had caught nothing:

Nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net] Which

(a) Targum in Ezek. xxxix. 11. Zohar in Gen. fol. 32. & 17. 2. & in Exod. fol. 52. 4. & 61. 4.

(b) Phil. i. 5. c. 15. Solim. c. 43. Ptolom. l. 5. c. 15.

(c) De Bello Jud. l. 3. c. 18. (d) P. R. E. Eliezer, c. 18.

Which shewed faith in Christ, and obedience to him. Thus the faithful preachers of the Gospel, sometimes labour and toil in the ministry of the word a great while, with little or no success; and are discouraged from going on, and would be tempted to leave off, were it not for the commission and word of command they have received from Christ, which they dare not be disobedient to; and for the word of promise he has given them, to be with them, on which they depend.

6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.

Had put the ship out further to sea, and had let down their net:

They inclosed a great multitude of fishes] In their net, which by the secret divine power of Christ were gathered together just in that place, where by his order they cast the net:

And their net brake] With the weight and number of the fishes, yet not so as to let the fish out; the Arabic version reads, "it was within a little that their nets were broke:" they were just upon breaking, the draught was so numerous, the struggling so great, and the weight so heavy.

7 And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

Zebedee, and his two sons, James and John; see *Mat.* 10. who were at some distance from them, probably lay at anchor near the shore, not having put out to sea when the other vessel did, and so were not within call; but they were obliged to make signs to them, and beckon them with their hands to come to them:

Which were in the other ship] Mentioned in *Mat.* 2. which lay by the shore:

That they should come and help them] Take up the net, and take the fish out of it:

And they came, and filled both the ships] With the fishes they took out of the net, as full as they could hold, and which they were not well able to carry:

So that they began to sink] Or "were almost immersed," as Beza's ancient copy, and another manuscript, with the Syriac, Arabic, and Persian versions, read; the vessels were so heavy laden, with the vast quantity of fish that was taken, that they were just ready to sink with their burden.

8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

Saw the multitude of fish that was taken, and both vessels filled with them, and the danger they were in of sinking,

He fell down at Jesus' knees] The Arabic and Persian versions read, "at his feet;" he fell on his knees before him, and threw himself prostrate at his feet, as a worshipper of him, and a suppliant unto him:

Saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord] This he said, not as though the presence of Christ was burdensome, or disagreeable to him; but as one amazed at the greatness of the miracle wrought, and struck with the sense of the power of Christ, put forth therein; and with the greatness of his majesty so near him; and as conscious to himself of his own vileness and unworthiness to be in his presence; and so the Persian version adds, and which may serve as a comment, "and am not worthy that thou shouldst be with me:" he had much the same sense of things as the centurion had, *Matt.* viii. 8. and when it is considered how gracious persons have been struck with awe and fear, and a consciousness of sin, weakness, and unworthiness, at the appearance of an angel, as Zacharias, *Luke* i. 12. and the shepherds, chap. ii. 9. yea, at the presence of an holy man of God, as the widow of Sarepta at Elijah, saying much the same as Peter does here, *1 Kings* xvii. 18. it need not be wondered at, that Peter should so express himself, in these circumstances.

9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:

His brother Andrew, and the servants they had with them to manage the vessel, and cast the nets:

At the draught of the fishes which they had taken] Being so large and numerous, as the like was never seen, nor known by them before.

10 And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

Who were in the other ship, and had been beckoned to them to come and help them, and did come, and were witnesses of the miracle:

Which were partners with Simon] Were sharers with him in loss and gain in the fishing trade; these were equally astonished at the miracle, as Simon and his brother, and the men that were in the boat with them, where Jesus was:

And Jesus said unto Simon] Who was at his knees, and expressed his dread of his majesty, and the consternation of mind he was in particularly:

Fear not] Do not be afraid of me, I shall do thee no

no harm, nor shall the boats sink, or any damage come to any person, or to the vessels; nor be so much amazed and affrighted at the multitude of the fishes taken:

From henceforth thou shalt catch men] Alive, as the word signifies, or "unto life," as the Syriac and Persic versions render it; thou shalt cast the net of the gospel, and be the happy instrument of drawing many persons out of the depths of sin and misery, in which they are plunged, into the way of life and salvation; and which was greatly verified, in the conversion of three thousand at one cast, under one sermon of his, *Acts* ii. 41.

11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

Both Simon Peter's, and the other in which his partners were, and which were laden with fish:

They forsook all] Even all their fish, which they doubtless might have made much money of, and their nets, and their ships, and their servants, and their relations, and friends:

And followed him] Christ; and became his disciples, even all four of them, Peter, Andrew, James, and John.

12 ¶ And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

Or near it, hard by it, very probably Capernaum; see *Matt.* viii. 1, 2, 5.

Behold a man full of leprosy] A disease to which the Jews were very incident, and concerning which, many laws and rules are given in *Levit.* xiii. and xiv. "The symptoms of the ancient *lepra*, as laid down by Galen, Aretæus, Pontanus, Ægineta, Cardan, Varanda, Gordon, Pharæus, and others, are as follows. The patient's voice is hoarse, and comes rather through the nose than the mouth; the blood full of little white shining bodies, like grains of millet, which upon filtration, separate themselves from it; the serum is scabious, and destitute of its natural humidity, insomuch that salt applied to it, does not dissolve; it is so dry, that vinegar poured on it boils; and is so strongly bound together by little imperceptible threads, that calcined lead thrown into it swims. The face resembles a coal-half extinct, unctuous, shining, and bloated, with frequent hard knobs, green at bottom, and white at top. The hair is short, stiff, and brinded; and not to be torn off, without bringing away some of the rotten flesh, to which it

adheres; if it grows again, either on the head or chin, it is always white: athwart the forehead, run large wrinkles or furrows, from one temple to the other; the eyes red and inflamed and shine like those of a cat; the ears swollen and red, eaten with ulcers towards the bottom, and encompassed with little glands; the nose sunk, because of the rotting of the cartilage; the tongue dry and black, swollen, ulcerated, divided with furrows, and spotted with grains of white; the skin covered with ulcers, that die and revive on each other, or with white spots, or scales like a fish; it is rough and insensible, and when cut, instead of blood, yields a fanious liquor: it arrives, in time, to such a degree of insensibility, that the wrist, feet, or even the large tendon, may be pierced with a needle, without the patient's feeling any pain; at last the nose, fingers, toes, and even privy members, fall off entire; and by a death peculiar to each of them, anticipate that of the patient: it is added, that the body is so hot, that a fresh apple held in the hand an hour, will be dried and wrinkled, as if exposed to the sun for a week (c)." Think now what a miserable deplorable object this man was, said to be full of it. Between this disease and sin, there is a very great likeness. This disease is a very filthy one, and of a defiling nature, by the ceremonial law; under which it was considered rather as an uncleanness, than as a disease; the person infected with it, was pronounced unclean by the priest, and was put out of the camp, and out of the cities and walled towns, that he might not defile others; and was obliged to put a covering on his upper lip, and cry *unclean, unclean*, to acknowledge his pollution, and that others might shun him. All mankind, by reason of sin, are by the Lord pronounced filthy; and by their evil actions, not only defile themselves, but others; evil communications, corrupt good manners: and when they are made sensible, freely own that their righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and they themselves as an unclean thing: it is a very nauseous and lothesome disease, as is sin; it is abominable to God, and renders men abominable in his sight; it causes the sinner himself, when convinced of it, to lothe and abhor himself: David calls his sin a lothesome disease, *Psal.* xxxviii. 7. it is of a spreading nature: this was a sign of it, if it did not spread, it was only a scab; if it spread, it was a leprosy, *Lev.* xiii. 5—8. Sin has spread itself over all mankind, and over all the powers and faculties of the soul, and members of the body; there is no place free of it: and, as the leprosy, is of a consuming nature, it eats and wastes

(c) Chambers's Cyclopædia in the word *Leprosy*.

wastes the flesh, see *Numb. xii. 12.* *2 Kings v. 10.* so sin eats like a canker, and brings ruin and destruction upon men, both in soul and body. This disease was incurable by medicine; persons that had it were never sent to a physician, but to a priest; and what he did was only this, he looked upon it, and if it was a clear case, he declared the person unclean; and if it was doubtful, he shut him up for seven days, and then inspected him again; and after all he could not cure him; this was the work of God, *2 Kings v. 7.* All which shews the nature and use of the law, which shuts men up, concludes them under sin, and by which they have knowledge of it, but no healing: the law heals none, it is the killing letter, the ministration of condemnation and death; Christ only, by his blood and stripes, heals the disease of sin, and cleanses from it. There is one thing in the law of the leprosy very surprising; and that is, that if there was any quick raw flesh, or any sound flesh in the place where the leprosy was, the man was pronounced unclean; but if the leprosy covered all his skin, and all his flesh, then he was pronounced clean: this intimates, that he that thinks he has some good thing in him, and fancies himself sound and well, and trusts to his own works of righteousness, he is not justified in the sight of God; but if a man acknowledges that there is no soundness in his flesh, that *in him, that is, in his flesh, dwells no good thing*, but that his salvation is alone, by the grace and mercy of God; such a man is justified by faith in Christ Jesus: the parable of the Pharisee and publican, will illustrate this, *Luke xviii. 10-14.*

Who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean]. See the note on *Matt. viii. 2.* Christ could cure lepers, and did; and which was a proof of his Messiahship, and is given among the signs of it to John's disciples, *Matt. xi. 5.* and as there is a likeness between the leprosy and sin, so between the cleansing of a leper under the law, and the healing of a sinner by Christ; for the cleansing of a leper, two birds were to be taken clean and alive, which were both typical of Christ, and pointed at the meekness of his human nature, his innocence, harmlessness, and purity, and that he had a life to lay down; one of these was to be killed, in an earthen vessel over running water, shewing that Christ must be killed, his blood must be shed for the cleansing of leprous sinners; the earthen vessel denoted his human nature, his flesh, in which he was put to death; and the running water, signified the purifying nature of his blood, and the continued virtue of it, to cleanse from all sin; and the blood and the water being mixed together, may put us in mind of the blood and water which flowed

from the side of Christ, when pierced with the spear; which was an emblem of our justification and sanctification being both from him, on account of which he is said to come both *by water and by blood*, *1 John v. 6.* The other bird, after it was dipped with the cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop in the blood of the slain bird, was let go alive; which typified the resurrection of Christ, who was put to death in the flesh, and quickened in the spirit; and who rose again, for the justification of his people from all sin: the cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop, which were used in the cleansing of the leper, may relate to all the sufferings, and death, and blood of Christ; the scarlet wool may denote the bloody sufferings of Christ, through which he was *red* in his apparel; the cedar wood, may signify the incorruptibleness and preciousness of the blood of Christ, and the hyssop the purging virtue of it; or else these three may have regard to the three principal graces of the Spirit of God, which have to do with, and are influenced by the sin-cleansing blood of Christ: the cedar wood may signify the incorruptible and precious grace of faith; the green hyssop, the lively grace of hope; and the scarlet, the flaming grace of love, when it is in its full exercise: or else the grace of faith, by which dealing with the blood of Christ, the heart is purified, is only meant; signified by cedar wood, for its permanency; by scarlet, for its likeness to the crimson blood of Christ; by which sins, though as scarlet, are made white as wool; and by hyssop, for its being an humble and lowly grace: now the cedar stick, with the scarlet wool, and bunch of hyssop bound unto it, was used to sprinkle the blood of the bird upon the leper seven times, when he was pronounced clean; and expresses the instrumentality of faith, in the application of the blood of Christ for cleansing: though after this, the leper was to shave off all his hair, and wash himself and clothes in water, suggesting to us, that holiness of life and conversation which should follow upon cleansing through faith in the blood of Christ.

13 And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.

Having compassion on him, and commiserating his sad case.

Saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him]. See the note on *Matthew viii. 3.*

14 And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

Tell

Tell no man of his cure, and by whom he received it;

But go and shew thyself to the priest] The Syriac and Perfic versions read, "to the priests:"

And offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses has commanded, for a testimony unto them] See the note on Matthew viii. 4.

15 But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities.

For the more he charged the man to keep silence, the more he blazed it abroad, being elated with the cure he had received, and filled with gratitude to his benefactor; see *Mark* i. 45.

And great multitudes came together to hear] Him, "or from him;" as the Syriac, Arabic, Perfic, and Ethiopic versions add; to hear the doctrines of the Gospel preached by him:

And to be healed by him of their infirmities] Their bodily weaknesses and disorders.

16 ¶ And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

Into a desert place, that he might have rest from the fatigues of preaching and healing diseases; and being alone, and free from company, might have an opportunity for private prayer to God; for so it follows:

And prayed] This is to be understood of Christ, as man: as God, he is the object of prayer, and petitions are often addressed unto him; and as mediator, he offers up the prayers of all saints, and presents them to his Father; which are acceptable to him, through the incense of his mediation; and as man, he prayed himself: what he now prayed for, is not known; sometimes he prayed for his disciples, and for all that should believe; for their conversion, sanctification, union, perseverance, and glorification; and sometimes for himself, that the cup might pass from him, and he be saved from death; but always with submission to the will of his Father.

17 ¶ And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.

When he was at Capernaum, as appears from *Mark* ii. 1.

As he was teaching] In the house, where such numbers were gathered together, to hear the word

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of God preached by him, that there was not room for them, neither within the house, nor about the door, *Mark* ii. 2.

That there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by] Who were sometimes called scribes, and sometimes lawyers, and were generally of the sect of the Pharisees:

Which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem] Having heard much of his doctrine and miracles, they came from all parts to watch and observe him, and to take all opportunities and advantages against him, that they might expose him to the people:

And the power of the Lord was present to heal them] Not the Pharisees and doctors of the law, who did not come to be healed by him, either in body or mind; but the multitude, some of whom came to hear his doctrine, and others to be healed of their infirmities, *ŷ. 15.* The Perfic version reads the words thus; "and from all the villages of Galilee, and from Judea, and from Jerusalem, multitudes came, and the power of God was present to heal them."

18 And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him.

Four men brought him, as *Mark* says, chap. ii. 3. and which the Ethiopic version expresses here: "and they sought means to bring him in;" into the house where Jesus was: "and to lay him before him;" at his feet, in hope of moving his compassion, and to obtain a cure of him: of the nature of this disease, and of the sort, which this man's seems to be, see the note on *Mark* ii. 3.

19 And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in, because of the multitude, they went upon the house-top, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus.

As by the door, or in at a window of the house: *They might bring him in]* To Jesus, in the house: *Because of the multitude]* Which was about the door, and all the fore-part of the house:

They went upon the house-top] By a ladder, or pair of stairs, which usually were on the outside of houses; see the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 17. the houses of the Jews being flat roofed:

And let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus] That is, they untiled the roof, or took away the tiles which were about the trap-door, or passage into the inside of the house; and so making it wider, let down the man upon

L

upon

upon his couch, or bed, into the middle of the room and of the people, just before Jesus, where he was sitting; see the note on *Mark ii. 4.*

20 And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

That is, Jesus, as the Syriac and Persic versions express it; when he saw the faith both of the paralytic man, and of the men that brought him, which was shewn in the pains they took, and trouble they were at in getting him to him;

He said unto him] The Vulgate Latin only reads he said; but the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions still more fully express the sense, rendering it, "he said to the paralytic man;" and the Ethiopic version, "he said to the infirm man;" as follows:

Man, thy sins are forgiven thee] The other Evangelists say, he said *son*; perhaps he used both words; however, all agree that he pronounced the forgiveness of sins, which were the cause of his disease; and which being removed, the effect must cease: so that he had healing both for soul and body; see the note on *Matthew ix. 2.*

21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?

They began to think, and say within themselves, and it may be to one another, in a private manner:

Saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies] What vain boaster, and blaspheming creature is this, who assumes that to himself, which is the prerogative of God?

Who can forgive sins, but God alone?] Against whom they are committed, whose law is transgressed, and his will disobeyed, and his justice injured and affronted. Certain it is, that none can forgive sins but God; not any of the angels in heaven, or men on earth; not holy good men, nor ministers of the Gospel; and if Christ had been a mere man, though ever so good a man, even a sinless one, or ever so great a prophet, he could not have forgiven sin; but he is truly and properly God, as his being a discernor of the thoughts of these men, and his healing the paralytic man in the manner he did, are sufficient proofs. The scribes and Pharisees therefore, though they rightly ascribe forgiveness of sin to God alone, yet grievously sinned, in imputing blasphemy to Christ: they had wrong notions of Christ, concluding him to be but a mere man, against the light and evidence of his works and miracles; and also of his office as a Redeemer, who came to save his people from their sins; and seem to restrain the power of forgiving sin to God the Father; whereas

the Son of God, being equal with him, had the same power, and that even on earth, to forgive sin; see the note on *Mark ii. 7.*

22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?

Being God omniscient, he knew their thoughts;

He answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?] This he said, not as being ignorant what their reasonings were, for it is before said he perceived their thoughts, but to expose the wickedness of them; in one exemplar of Beza's it is added, *evil things*, as in *Matt. ix. 4.* see the note there.

23 Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?

Mark adds, *to the sick of the palsy*; to whom Christ had said that his sins were forgiven him, which had given offence to the scribes and Pharisees, imagining that he had assumed too much to himself: wherefore he proposes the following case to them, which they thought was most easy for man, or more proper and peculiar to God to say,

Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?] Neither of them could be said by a mere man, with effect, so as that sins would be really remitted on so saying; or that a man sick of a palsy, by such a word speaking, would be able to stand upon his feet and walk; but both of them were equally easy to him that is truly God; and he that could say the one effectually, could also say the other: or in other words, he that could cure a man of a palsy with a word speaking, ought not to be charged with blasphemy, for taking upon him to forgive sin: our Lord meant, by putting this question, and acting upon it, to prove himself to be God, and to remove the imputation of blasphemy from him; see the notes on *Matt. ix. 5.* and *Mark ii. 9.*

24 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go unto thine house.

Whom the scribes and Pharisees took for a mere man, in which they were mistaken; for though he was really a man, and the Son of man, yet he was God as well as man; he was *God manifest in the flesh*:

Hath power upon earth to forgive sins] Even in the days of his flesh, whilst he was in his humble form on earth; for he did not cease to be God by becoming

becoming man, nor lose any branch of his power, not this of forgiving sin, by appearing in the form of a servant; and that it might be manifest,

He said unto the sick of the palsy] These are the words of the Evangelist, signifying, that Christ turned himself from the scribes and Pharisees to the paralytic man, and thus addressed him:

I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go unto thine house.

25 And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.

As soon as ever these words were spoken by Christ, the man, before sick of the palsy, finding himself perfectly well, got off of his couch, and stood up on his feet before the scribes and Pharisees, and all the people:

And took up that whereon he lay] His couch, or bed:

And departed to his own house] With it upon his back; "and went to his business;" as the Persian version renders it:

Glorifying God] Both for the healing of his body, and for the pardon of his sins; each of which he knew none but God could do. This circumstance is only mentioned by Luke, and shews the sense the man had of the great favours bestowed upon him: he glorified God, by ascribing them to his goodness and power; by offering the sacrifice of praise, or giving thanks unto him for them; by publishing them among his neighbours, to the honour of his name; and by living a holy life and conversation, to his glory, under a grateful sense of his kindness: yea, he glorified Jesus Christ as God, whom he knew must be God, by forgiving his sins, and curing his disease; he proclaimed his divine power, and ascribed greatness to him; he confessed him as the Messiah, and owned him as his Saviour, and became subject to him as his Lord.

26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to-day.

Not the Pharisees, and doctors of the law, but the common people:

And were filled with fear] Of the divine Being, whose presence and power they were sensible must be in this case:

Saying, We have seen strange things to-day] Paradoxes, things wonderful, unthought of, unexpected, and incredible by carnal reason, and what were never seen, nor known before; as that a man, who was so enfeebled by the palsy that he

was obliged to be carried on a bed by four men, yet, on a sudden, by a word speaking, rose up, and carried his bed on his back home.

27 ¶ And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.

After his discourse with the scribes and Pharisees, and his healing of the man sick with the palsy, he went forth from the city of Capernaum, to the sea-side; not only for retirement and recreation, after the work of the day hitherto, but in order to meet with, and call one that was to be a disciple of his:

And saw a publican, named Levi] Who is said to be the son of *Alpheus*, Mark ii. 14. and so it is said to be in Beza's ancient copy here; and who was also called *Matthew*, see *Matt.* ix. 9.

Sitting at the receipt of custom] At the place where custom was received, and toll taken, near the sea-side, of such that went over. The Syriac and Persian versions read, "sitting among publicans," of which business he was himself; and these might be his servants under him, or partners with him; see the note on *Mark* ii. 14.

And he said unto him, Follow me] Of all the publicans that were there, he singled out Levi, or Matthew, and directed his discourse to him, and called him to be a follower of him: an instance of powerful, special, and distinguishing grace this; see the note on *Matthew* ix. 9.

28 And he left all, rose up, and followed him.

Left his company, his business, and all the profits of it:

Rose up] Directly; such power went along with the words of Christ, that he could not withstand it:

And followed him] Not only in a literal, but in a spiritual sense, and became a disciple of his.

29 ¶ And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them.

At Capernaum, which, very likely, was made some time after his call, though recorded here; for it is not reasonable to think there could be time enough that day to get ready so great a feast, as this is said to be. Levi, it should seem, was a rich man, and in gratitude to Christ for his special grace and favour bestowed on him, made this entertainment for him; and he seems to have had also another view in it, to bring him into the company

pany of his fellow-publicans, hoping he might be useful to them, as he had been to him; for of this nature is true grace, to wish for and desire the salvation of the souls of others, as well as a man's own:

And there was a great company of publicans, and of others] אחרים which word is sometimes used in Talmudic writings for Gentiles; so אשה אחרים "the wife of others," is interpreted the wife of the Cuthites, or Samaritans (f): and thus the Jews explain the text in *Deut. xxiv. 14. Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, on which they make this remark, פרט לאחרים* "this excepts others;" that is, as the gloss interprets it, it excepts the nations of the world, or the Gentiles: they go on to expound the text, *or of thy strangers that are in thy land*; these are the proselytes of righteousness: *within thy gates*; these are they that eat things that are torn (g): so that the *others* are distinguished from the Jews, and from both the proselytes of righteousness, and of the gate; and it is easy to observe, that publicans and heathens are sometimes mentioned together: here it means sinners, as appears from *Matt. ix. 10. Mark ii. 15.* such the Gentiles were reckoned:

That sat down with them] Being invited by Matthew.

30 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

Not the scribes of the publicans and sinners that sat down, but the scribes of the people in general; the scribes of the Jewish nation: all the eastern versions leave out the word *their*:

Murmured against his disciples, saying] Or, "murmured, and said unto his disciples," as the Syriac and Persic versions render it: that is, they either murmured at the publicans and sinners sitting down at meat; or, "against him," as the Ethiopic version reads: either against Matthew for inviting them; or rather against Christ for sitting down with them: and, not caring to speak to him, address themselves to his disciples in these words;

Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?] The other Evangelists represent these as saying, Why does he, or your master, eat with such? doubtless, they included both Christ and his disciples; though they chiefly designed him, and to bring an accusation against him, and fix a charge upon him, in order to render him odious to the people.

(f) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 52. 2. & Gloss. in *ibid.*

(g) T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 111. 2. & Gloss. in *ibid.*

31 And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.

Knowing that they aimed at him; though, according to this Evangelist, they only mentioned his disciples: however, he takes up the cause, and vindicates both himself and them, by observing to them the following proverb;

They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick] Suggesting hereby, that as such who are in good health, who are free from all diseases, wounds, bruises, and putrifying sores, stand in no need of the advice and assistance of a physician, or surgeon, but such who have either distempers or sores on their bodies; so they, the scribes and Pharisees, who, in their own opinion, were free from the disease of sin, original and actual, and touching the righteousness of the law, were blameless, stood not in any need of him, the physician, who came to cure the maladies of the souls, as well as of the bodies of men; but such persons, who not only are sick with sin, but sick of it, who are sensible of it, and desire healing: and therefore this was the reason of his conduct, why he conversed with sinners, and not with the scribes and Pharisees; his business, as a physician, lying among the one, and not the other; see the notes on *Matt. ix. 12. and Mark ii. 17.*

32 I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Such as the scribes and Pharisees were in their own apprehension, and in the esteem of others, who *trusted in themselves, that they were righteous*, and submitted not to the righteousness of Christ: these Christ came not to call by his grace, and therefore did not associate with them:

But sinners to repentance] Such as the publicans, and others with them, were; and therefore he was chiefly with such, and chose to be among them: these he not only called to repentance by the outward ministry of the word, but brought them to it; he having power to bestow the grace of repentance, as well as to call to the duty of it; see the notes on *Matt. ix. 13. and Mark ii. 17.*

33 ¶ And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?

The scribes and Pharisees, or the disciples of John; see *Matt. ix. 14.*

Why do the disciples of John fast often and make prayers?] Set times apart frequently for fasting and prayer. The Ethiopic version reads, "Why do

“do the disciples of John baptize frequently, fast, and make prayers?” In which the former clause is added; and as without any authority, so without judgment, since it must suppose that the Pharisees did so likewise, whereas, they rejected the baptism of John; for it follows,

And likewise the disciples of the Pharisees] Who fasted often, at least twice in the week, and made frequent prayers in the synagogues, and corners of the streets, and in widows houses.

But thine eat and drink?] Instead of fasting and praying; see the note on *Matt. ix. 14.*

34 And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them.

Said to the disciples of John, or the scribes and Pharisees:

Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?] Signifying, that he was the bridegroom, and his disciples the children of the bridechamber; and that as it is unreasonable to expect, and morally impossible, that persons attending the festivals of a nuptial solemnity, should be engaged in severe fastings; so it was not to be thought, that whilst Christ was corporally present with his disciples, that they should be prevailed upon to live such an austere and mortified life.

35 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

And that in a very little time, as they did:

When the bridegroom shall be taken away from them] As their master, John, was taken away from them, and now in prison, and therefore it was no wonder they mourned and fasted; signifying, that in a short time he, the bridegroom of his church and people, should be taken away by death:

And then they shall fast in those days] Or mourn, and be humbled, of which fasting was a sign, for the death of their Lord, and on account of the many afflictions and persecutions they should endure for his sake; see the note on *Matt. ix. 15.*

36 ¶ And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old.

Spake unto the scribes and Pharisees; illustrating what he had just now said:

No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an

old] By a piece of a new garment, meaning the new and upstart notions and traditions of the elders, which were so in comparison of the law of Moses; and by the *old*, the robe of their own righteousness, wrought out in obedience to the moral and ceremonial law: and Christ suggests, that to join these together, in order to patch up a garment of righteousness to appear in before God, was equally as weak and ridiculous, as to put a piece of new and undrest cloth into a garment that was old, and wore threadbare.

If otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent] That is, much worse than it was, as it is expressed both in Matthew and Mark; the old and new cloth being unfuitable, and not of equal strength to hold together: by this Christ intimates, that the Jews, by being directed to the observance of the traditions of the elders, were drawn off from a regard to the commandments of God; so that instead of having a better righteousness, they had one much the worse, a ragged and a rent one.

And the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old] And so the statutes of men and the ordinances of God, or the traditions of the elders and the commands of God, are no more like one another, than the piece of a new and an old garment; and as unlike is obedience to the one, and to the other: see the notes on *Matt. ix. 16, 17.* and *Mark ii. 21, 22.* where this, and the following parable, are more largely explained.

37 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish.

To which the scribes and Pharisees are here compared, into whose hearts the new wine of Gospel-grace was not put; or to whom was not made known the love of God, comparable to new wine; nor the blessings of the new covenant of grace, now exhibited; nor the truths of the Gospel, now more clearly and newly revealed.

Else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled] They not being able to receive and bear these things, no, not the relation of them: these were hard sayings to them, of which they said, Who can hear them? They could not hear them with patience, much less receive them in the love of them; but were at once filled with wrath, and indignation, and rejected them.

And the bottles shall perish] Their condemnation shall be the greater.

38 But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved.

Such as the disciples of Christ were, and sinners called to repentance are; who are renewed by the Spirit

Spirit and grace of God : and these are filled with spiritual joy and comfort, as with new wine, arising from the discoveries of the love of God, a view of interest in the blessings of the covenant, and an application of Gospel-truths and promises.

And both are preserved] Both these renewed ones, who are preserved unto the kingdom and glory of Christ; and the grace that is put into them, which is a well of living water, springing up to everlasting life; as well as the Gospel, and its blessings.

39 No man also having drank old wine, straightway desireth new : for he saith, The old is better.

Wine, though not in the text, is rightly supplied by our translators, as it is by the Syriac and Perfic versions:

Straightway desireth new] That is, new wine:

For he saith, The old is better] Old wine is more grateful, more generous, and more reviving to the spirit, than new wine is. This is a proverbial expression, and which Luke only records; which may be applied to natural men, who having drank the old wine of their carnal lusts and pleasures, do not desire the new wine of the Gospel, and of the grace of God, and of spiritual things, but prefer their old sins and lusts unto them: carnal lusts may be signified by old wine, both for the antiquity of them, being as old as men themselves, and therefore called the *old man*, and for the gratefulness of them to their nature; and who may be said to drink of them, as they do drink iniquity like water; which is expressive of their great desire and thirst after it, and delight in it: now whilst they are such, they cannot desire the new wine of the Gospel, which is insipid and ungrateful to them; nor the grace of God, to which their carnal minds are enmity; nor any thing that is evangelical and spiritual, at least not straightway, or immediately; not until they are regenerated by the Spirit of God, and their taste is changed; but will prefer their old lusts and former course of life unto them: or it may be accommodated to legalists, and men of a pharisaical spirit, to whom spiritual and evangelical things are very disagreeable: scribes and Pharisees, who have drank of the old wine of the law, and the traditions of the elders, do not desire the new wine of the Gospel, but prefer the former to it: the ceremonial law may be expressed by old wine, being originally instituted of God, and acceptable to him; and one part of which lay in libations of wine, and was of long standing, but now waxen old, and ready to vanish away; and likewise the traditions of the elders, which were highly pleasing to the Pharisees, and which pretended to great antiquity: and of these they

might be said to *drink*, being inured to them from their youth, and therefore could not like the new dispensation of the Gospel, neither its doctrines, nor its ordinances; but preferred their old laws and traditions to them: or rather, this proverb, as used by Christ here, may be considered, as intimating the reason why the disciples did not give into the practices of the Pharisees, because they had drank of the old wine of the Gospel; which, as upon some account it may be called new, because of the new dispensation, fresh discovery, and clearer revelation of it; in other respects it may be said to be old, being what was prepared and ordained before the world began; and what Adam drank of, in the first hint and promise of the Messiah; and after him Noah, the preacher of righteousness; and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to whom the Gospel was preached before; and even Moses, who wrote and testified of Christ; and David, and Solomon, and Isaiah, and all the prophets of the former dispensation: and now the disciples having more largely drank of it, under the ministry of Christ, could not easily desire the new wine of the fastings and prayers of the Pharisees, and John's disciples; for the old wine of the Gospel was much better in their esteem, more grateful to the taste, more refreshing to their spirits, and more salutary and healthful, being the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ. Old wine, with the Jews (*b*), was wine of three years old, and was always by them preferred to new: so they descant on those words in *Deut. xv. 16. because he is well with thee* (*i*), (that is, the servant) "with thee in food, with thee in drink; for thou shalt not eat bread of fine flour; and he eat bread of bran; or thou drink, *וְיָשָׁה* "old wine," and he drink, *וְיָשָׁה* "new wine." And sometimes they use this distinction of old and new wine proverbially and parabolically, as here (*k*). "Rabba Jose bar Juda, a man of a village in Babylon, used to say, He that learns of young men, to what is he like? to him that eateth unripe grapes, and drinks wine out of the fat: but he that learns of old men, to what is he like? to him that eats ripe grapes, and drinks *וְיָשָׁה* "old wine:" signifying, that the knowledge of old men is more solid, and mature, and unmixed, and free from dregs of ignorance, than that of young men: though it follows, that "Ribbi had used to say, Do not look upon the tankard, but on what is in it; for sometimes there is a new tankard full of old wine, and an old one in which there is not so much as new in it:" signifying,

(*b*) T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 51. 1. & Gloss, in *ibid.* & Bava Batra, fol. 98. 1. & Maimon. Hilch. Mecira, c. 17. §. 6.

(*i*) T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 22. 1.

(*k*) Pirke Abot, c. 4. §. 20.

nifying, that sometimes young men are full of wisdom and knowledge, when old men are entirely devoid of them.

CHAP. VI.

In this chapter Christ defends his disciples plucking the ears of corn, v. 1—5. Cureth a man's withered hand on the sabbath, and vindicates himself in so doing, v. 6—11. His retirement for secret prayer, v. 12. His calling his twelve apostles, v. 13—16. His curing several sick and possessed persons that applied to him, v. 17—19. He sheweth who are blessed, and who not, v. 20—26. exhorteth to observe several precepts, v. 27—38. teacheth that a man should look to himself before he reproveth another, v. 39—42. and that we may know the tree by its fruit, v. 43—45. He proveth by the similitude of an house built on a rock, that we must not only know, but do his will, v. 46—49.

AND it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn-fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands.

Or “second first sabbath,” concerning which interpreters are greatly divided. Some think, that it was either the seventh day of the feast of unleavened bread, or the eighth day of the feast of tabernacles. Others, that it was the sabbath which fell that year on the day of Pentecost; and that as there were three grand festivals among the Jews, the feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles; so when the sabbath-day fell on the feast of the passover, it was called the first prime sabbath, when on the feast of Pentecost, it was called the second prime sabbath, and when on the feast of tabernacles, the third prime sabbath. Others have been of opinion, that as the Jews had two beginnings of their year, the one on civil accounts in Tisri, the other on ecclesiastical accounts in Nisan; so the first sabbath in Tisri was called the first first sabbath, and that in Nisan, which was this, the second first sabbath: but what seems most likely is, that this sabbath was, as it may be rendered, the first sabbath after the second; that is, the first sabbath after the second day of the passover, when the sheaf of the firstfruits was offered, and harvest might be begun; which suits well with ears of corn being ripe at this time, which the disciples rubbed. So the Jews reckoned the seven weeks from thence to Pentecost by sabbaths; the first after the second day they called the second first, or the first after the second day; the second they called the second second; and the third was named the second third; and so on, the second fourth, the second fifth, the

second sixth, and second seventh, which brought on Pentecost when the harvest was ended. So in the Jewish liturgies, there are collects for the first sabbath after the passover, and for the second sabbath after the passover, and so on to the sabbath before Pentecost. The eastern versions, Syriac, Arabic, Persian, and Ethiopic, not knowing what should be meant by it, have only rendered it, *on the sabbath-day*, as in *Matt. xii. 1*. See the note there.

That he went through the corn-fields] That is, Jesus, as the Syriac, Persian, and Ethiopic versions:

And his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat rubbing them in their hands] After they had plucked them, they rubbed them in their hands to get clean off the husk or beard, that were on them, and then eat the grains. And as plucking of the ears of corn was forbidden on a sabbath-day, see the note on *Matt. xii. 2*. so was rubbing them; though if they were rubbed before, the chaff might be blown off from them in the hand, and eat on the sabbath-day: the rule is this (a); “He that rubs ears of corn on the evening of the sabbath, that is, on the sixth day) may blow them from hand to hand on the morrow, and eat.” But the disciples both plucked them and rubbed them, and blew away the chaff from them on the sabbath-day, and therefore were complained of by the Pharisees.

2 And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath-days?

Said unto the disciples. The Evangelists Matthew and Mark say, that they said this to Jesus: no doubt but they said it to both, first to one, and then to the other; probably last of all to Christ, who returned an answer to it:

Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath-days?] As, to pluck ears of corn, and rub them, and eat them; see the note on *Matt. xii. 2*.

3 And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when himself was an hungered, and they which were with him;

4 How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shewbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone?

For they brought the charge against the disciples to him, being desirous to know what he would say, and that they might have something to accuse him of;

(a) T. Bab. Betza, fol. 12, 2, & 13, 2. Vid. Maimon, Hilk. Sabbat, c. 21. §. 14, 17.

of; and who, at once, took up the cause of his disciples, and vindicated them, by observing what David did, when he and his men were an hungry; how that he went into the tabernacle, and took the shewbread, and eat of it, and gave it to his men, who did also eat of it; which, according to the law, was only allowed to priests; and by taking notice of another instance, which this Evangelist does not relate; namely, how on the sabbath-days the priests, by doing various servile works, profaned the sabbath-day, and yet were not charged with any blame; see the notes on *Matt. xii. 3, 4, 5.*

5 And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

He adds this at the close of the instances he gave, at the end of his vindication of his disciples, and discourse with the Pharisees, as a full answer to their cavils:

That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath] And may do what he will, and suffer his disciples to do whatever he pleases on that day; see the note on *Matt. xii. 8.*

6 ¶ And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered.

Whether on the following sabbath, or some time after, is not certain,

That he entered into the synagogue] The Arabic version reads, "into their synagogue," as in *Matt. xii. 9.* the synagogue of the Jews; in what place, whether at Capernaum, or some other city of Galilee, is not so clear:

And taught] Explained the scriptures to the people, and instructed them in the doctrines of the Gospel:

And there was a man whose right hand was withered] Who was in the synagogue, and one of his hearers; see the note on *Matt. xii. 10.*

7 And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath-day; that they might find an accusation against him.

See the note on *Mark iii. 2.*

Whether he would heal on the sabbath-day] There being such an object before him:

That they might find an accusation against him] As they had before against his disciples.

8 But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth.

Being the omniscient God, though they had said nothing of their intentions, he knew what they designed, should he heal the man with his withered hand, as they expected he would:

And said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst] The Syriac and Persian versions add, "of the synagogue;" and which is the true sense; see the note on *Mark iii. 3.*

And he arose and stood forth] He rose up from his seat, and stood up in the midst of the synagogue, and of the people, that he might be seen of all.

9 Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath-days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?

Of the scribes and Pharisees, who were watching him, and whose thoughts, and the reasonings of their minds, purposes and intentions, he full well knew:

I will ask you one thing] Or question, as they had asked him one before; see *Matt. xii. 10.*

Is it lawful on the sabbath-days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?] See the note on *Mark iii. 4.* to which may be added, that to save life on the sabbath-day was agreeable to their own canons: there were many things which they allowed might be done on the sabbath-day, when life was in danger, which otherwise were not lawful; see the note on *Matt. xii. 8.*

10 And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

Looking on the scribes and Pharisees, and the rest of the people in the synagogue; see the note on *Mark iii. 5.*

He said to the man] Who had the withered hand, *Stretch forth thy hand; and he did so]* "He stretched it out," as the Syriac and Persian versions render it, which he was not able to do before:

And his hand was restored whole as the other] The phrase, *whole as the other*, is left out in one copy, and in the Vulgate Latin version; and so is the word *whole* in the Syriac and Arabic versions; and the word *immediately* is added in the Ethiopic version. And certain it is, that his withered hand was restored sound and well as the other, directly.

11 And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

Both at the cure, and because they could not answer him, nor properly fix a charge upon him,

or

or accuse him before the people, without bringing their resentments on them:

And communed one with another what they might do with Jesus.] This they did after they came out of the synagogue, and when with the Herodians, as in *Mark* iii. 6. see the note there.

12 ¶ And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

When Christ was teaching by the lake of Genesareth, or in one or other of the cities of Galilee near that place:

That he went out.] Of the synagogue and city where he had been:

Into a mountain to pray.] For the sake of solitude, and which lay near the sea of Tiberias; see the note on *Matt.* xiv. 23.

And continued all night in prayer to God.] Or with God, as the Ethiopic version renders it, or in the prayer of God, as the phrase may be literally rendered; not in a prayer of God's making; though the Jews (*b*) sometimes speak of the prayer of God, and give us a form of it: but either this respects the object of his prayer, it was made to God, as our translation suggests; or the nature, matter, and manner of it: it was a divine prayer, it regarded divine things, and was put up in a very fervent manner, and with great vehemence: so the coals of love or jealousy are said to be coals of fire, which hath שִׁלְהֶבֶת *"the flame of Jehovah,"* that is, as we render it, a most vehement flame, Cant. viii. 6. In like manner, prayer of God is a most vehement prayer; strong cries sent up to God with great eagerness and importunity, fervency and devotion; and such was Christ's prayer, and in which he continued all night: unless by the prayer of God should be meant, as is thought by many, an house of prayer to God, in which Christ lodged all night, and spent it in prayer to God in it. Certain it is, the Jews had their *proseuchas*, or prayer-houses. Philo the Jew (*c*) often speaks of them, and so does Josephus (*d*); and there seems to be mention made of them in the Talmudic writings: when R. Jochanan ben Zaccai came to Vespasian, in his camp before Jerusalem, Vespasian asked him, What he should give him; he replied (*e*), "I desire nothing of thee but this *gabneh*, (a famous university) that I may teach in it the disciples, and fix in it, חֲפֵלָה *an oratory, or prayer house*, and do in it "all the commandments said in the law." And in another place (*f*), "R. Judah says, that Samuel

said, It is free for a man to make water within "four cubits, מִן הַיָּדָו *in which I should choose* "to render, of the *proseucha*, or prayer-house." Though the Gemarists afterwards, and so the gloss, seem to explain it of the time after prayer, in which a man should wait before he evacuates, even as long as he might go the length of four cubits. Juvenal (*g*) has reference to one of these oratories, when he says, *in qua te quæro proseucha?* and in one of these, it is very likely, Christ was in prayer all night long; for by the seaside, and by the side of rivers, these oratories were used to be; see *Matt.* xvi. 13, 16.

13 And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;

Or morning; having spent the whole night in prayer to God, no doubt for his disciples, whom he was about to send forth as his apostles, to preach his Gospel, and work miracles, and for their success therein:

He called unto him his disciples.] The whole company of them, as in *x. 17.* all that were his followers, and professed to believe in him, or as many as he pleased; see *Mark* iii. 13.

And of them he chose twelve.] And ordained them, and sent them out to preach, heal sicknesses, and cast out devils:

Whom he also named apostles.] Of messengers, from their being sent by him on such important business; and their names are as follow,

14 Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew,

Peter signifies a rock, or stone, as Cephas also does, see *John* i. 42. so named from his constancy, steadfastness, and solidity:

And Andrew his brother.] Who was called at the same time with him, and were brethren, both in nature and grace:

James and John.] The two sons of Zebedee, who were called next:

Philip and Bartholomew.] The latter of these, is by some thought to be Nathanael.

15 Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes,

Matthew was a publican, and who also was called *Levi*; and the latter had besides the name of *Didymus*, and was he that was so unbelieving of Christ's resurrection:

(b) T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 7. 1. Bereshit Rabba, §. 56. fol. 50. 2.

(c) De Vita Moysi, l. 3. p. 685. in Flaccum, p. 971, 972, 982.

Jeg. ad Caium, p. 1011, 1012, 1013, 1014, 1015, 1040, 1043.

(d) In Vita.

(e) Abot R. Nathan, l. 4. fol. 2. 4.

(f) T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 27. 2.

James the son of Alphaeus] Sometimes called James the less, and the brother of our Lord :

And Simon called Zelotes] Or the Canaanite ; see the note on *Matt. x. 4.*

16 And Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

Brother of that James that was the son of Alphaeus ; though the Syriac and Arabic versions call him " the son of James," very wrongly : this Judas was also called *Thaddæus* and *Lebbaeus*, and is the writer of the Epistle that bears his name :

And Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor] Both his surname and his character are mentioned, to distinguish him from the other Judas : it is easy to observe, that these twelve are mentioned by pairs, or couples, and so they were sent out, two by two ; see *Mark vi. 7.* as were also the seventy disciples afterwards ; see *Luke x. 1.* There seems to be an allusion to the pairs and couples of the Jewish fathers and doctors, who in their succession are thus paired : Jose ben Joezer, and Joseph ben Jochanan ; Joshua ben Perachia, and Nathan the Arbelite ; Simeon ben Shetach, and Judah ben Tabai ; Shemaia and Abtalion ; the two sons of Bethira, whose names were Judah and Joshua ; Hillel and Shammai (b) : all before Christ's time.

17 ¶ And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases ;

With the twelve apostles, from the top of the mountain, where he had been praying all night, and where he had been that morning, ordaining and giving instructions to the twelve he had chosen :

And stood in the plain] In a lower part of the mountain, in a plain place on it ; which was large, and capable of holding a great number of people ; for it was still upon the mount that Christ taught his disciples, and said many of the things hereafter mentioned in this chapter ; see *Matt. v. 1.*

And the company of his disciples] Not only the twelve, but the large number out of which he had chosen twelve :

And a great multitude of people] Who were hearers of him, and attendants on him, and who had a great esteem for him, though they were not as yet of the number of his disciples ; who came

Out of all Judea, and Jerusalem, and from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon] Drawn from these several

parts by the fame of him, some for one thing, and some another ; some of

Which came to hear him] To hear him preach, and that they might know what manner of doctrine he taught : and others of them,

To be healed of their diseases] Their bodily diseases, and some came perhaps for both.

18 And they that were vexed with unclean spirits : and they were healed.

Who were possessed with devils, and sadly tormented and afflicted by them :

And they were healed] Both such that had bodily diseases, and were under diabolical possessions.

19 And the whole multitude sought to touch him : for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all.

That is, the multitude of those that were sick and possessed ; for they were persuaded, and they found it true by experience, that if they could but touch any part of his body, or his garments, they should be cured of their diseases :

For there went virtue out of him] In great abundance, as water from a fountain ; without his speaking a word, or using any gesture, or so much as laying his hands on them :

And they were healed] In this secret and private way, of whatsoever disease they were afflicted with.

20 ¶ And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor : for yours is the kingdom of God.

Either on the whole company of them, or rather the twelve apostles, whom he saw coming to him, and fixing his eyes on them, he said,

And said] What follows, with many other things recorded by Matthew :

Blessed be ye poor] Not only in the things of this world, having left all for Christ, but poor in spirit, as in *Matt. v. 3.* see the note there :

For yours is the kingdom of God] Or heaven, so in *Matt. v. 3.*

21 Blessed are ye that hunger now : for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now : for ye shall laugh.

Not only suffer hunger and thirst in a literal sense, in this present life, but who have hunger and thirst in a spiritual sense, after righteousness and eternal life, as in *Matt. v. 6.* where it is also said as here :

For ye shall be filled] With righteousness and life ; see the note there :

Blessed are ye that weep now] Under afflictions and pressures of life, and mourn for sin, their own, and others :

For ye shall laugh] Be filled with spiritual joy and pleasure, and be comforted with the consolations of the Spirit ; see the note on *Matthew* v. 4.

22 Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

For the sake of Christ, and his Gospel :

And when they shall separate you] From their company, either from civil conversation with them, as if they were Gentiles and uncircumcised persons ; or from their religious assemblies, and so may have respect to that sort of excommunication in use among the Jews, called, "חלוקה" or separation ; by which persons were not only excluded from the congregation, but from all civil society and commerce : such a person might not sit nearer to another than four cubits ; and this continued for thirty days ; and if not discharged then, he continued thirty more (i) :

And shall reproach you] As heretics, apostates, and enemies to the law of Moses, as the Jews did reproach the christians ;

And cast out your name as evil] Or "as of evil men," as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it : this may have respect to the greater sort of excommunication used among them, called *Shammatha* and *Cherem*, by which a person was accursed, and devoted to destruction ; so that our Lord's meaning is, that they should be esteemed and treated as the worst of men, and stigmatized in the vilest manner they were capable of :

For the Son of man's sake] Not for any immorality committed by them, but only for professing and preaching, that the Messiah was come in the flesh, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he ; and that he who was the Son of man, according to his human nature, was the Son of God according to his divine nature.

23 Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy : for, behold, your reward is great in heaven : for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

When they should be hated, discarded, reproached, and anathematized :

And leap for joy] As if the greatest honour and happiness imaginable, had been conferred on them ; and as persons do, when in the greatest rapture :

For, behold, your reward is great in heaven ; for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets] See the note on *Matthew* v. 12.

24 But wo unto you that are rich ! for ye have received your consolation.

Not in worldly riches and substance, for some of these have been, and are happy persons in a spiritual sense ; and at most, it can only mean such who trust in their riches, and place their happiness in them ; but it chiefly regards such as are rich in their own opinion, and stand in need of nothing ; who place their confidence in their own righteousness, and do not apply to Christ, in whom alone are durable riches and righteousness :

For ye have received your consolation] Which they take from their own works, and a very unstable and short-lived one it is ; for while they are crying Peace, peace, to themselves, from their own services, sudden destruction comes upon them, and all their comforts vanish away : for there is no true solid comfort but in Christ, and in his righteousness ; that administers consolation now, and lays a foundation for everlasting comfort hereafter.

25 Wo unto you that are full ! for ye shall hunger. Wo unto you that laugh now ! for ye shall mourn and weep.

Full, not so much with the plenty and affluence of the things of this life, as of themselves and their own righteousness ; and so with conceit, vanity, and pride, and have no appetite for spiritual things ; nor do they hunger and thirst after Christ, and the grace that is in him :

For ye shall hunger] Not that they shall truly and spiritually desire an interest in Christ and his righteousness, or heaven and eternal life hereafter ; but they shall be in starving and famishing circumstances ; and whilst the saints are feeding upon the joys and glories of the other world, compared to a banquet, they shall be without, and have no share in these things ; see *Isa.* lxxv. 13, 14.

Wo unto you that laugh now] At sin, rejoice in iniquity, make a mock at it, instead of mourning for it ; or that glory in themselves, and in their righteousness, and rejoice in their boastings :

For ye shall mourn and weep] Shall be cast into outer darkness, where are weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth ; and for all the fire they have kindled, and sparks they have encompassed themselves with, and danced in and about, this they shall have at the hand of God, they shall lie down in sorrow, and ever continue in it.

26 Wo unto you, when all men shall speak well of you ! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

(i) Vid. Maimon, Talmud Tora, c. 7. §. 4—6.

The word *all*, is left out in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, and is wanting in many copies; though it is in the Alexandrian copy; and the meaning is, it looks ill in persons, when the men of the world, wicked men all of them, or the greater part of them, applaud and commend them; for this can never be, if they are truly religious persons, and are faithful to their principles, and upright in their practices; and do not connive at, or comply with the errors and evil ways of wicked men; for it is no bad sign, to have the good word of good men, and therefore these must be excepted, and the passage must be limited to bad men;

For so did their fathers to the false prophets] They spoke well of them, and heaped favours, riches, and honours upon them, that they might prophecy unto them smooth things; see 1 Kings xxii. 6, 12, 27. Isa. xxx. 10.

27 ¶ But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,

The Ethiopic version adds *me*, and the generality of interpreters understand the passage of the hearers of Christ, as distinct from the disciples, or together with them, and of the better sort of them; and of such as had ears to hear, and who heard with a desire of understanding, and of putting into practice what they heard: but I rather think it regards the hearers of the scribes and Pharisees, then present, who had heard and received the traditions of the elders, to which the following rules of Christ are opposed; and to each of which, with others in Matthew, these words are prefixed; *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time—but I say unto you*, &c. Matt. v. 21, 27, 33, 38, 43. with which compare this phrase, and the sense will appear to be this; to you that hear day by day, the traditions of the elders urged upon you, and the false glosses the scribes and Pharisees put upon the word of God; in opposition to them, I say to you what follows:

Love your enemies] Whereas you have heard them say, hate your enemies, keep enmity in your hearts to them, and revenge yourselves on them:

Do good to them that hate you] Whereas you have heard it said, that you should only do good to your friends, and should keep anger in your bosoms to such who hate you, and do you an injury; see the notes on Matthew v. 43, 44.

28 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

In common discourse, or anathematize you in their synagogues:

And pray for them which despitefully use you] So Christ himself did; see the note on Matt. v. 44.

29 And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also.

The one, or right cheek:

Offer also the other] The left cheek, by turning it to him, that he may smite that likewise, if he thinks fit: by which proverbial expression, Christ teaches patience in bearing injuries and affronts, and not to seek private revenge; but rather suffer more, than indulge such a temper; and for the same purpose, is what follows urged:

And him that taketh away thy cloke, forbid not to take thy coat also] The phrase is inverted in Matthew; see the notes on Matthew v. 39, 40.

30 Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.

See the note on Matthew v. 42.

And of him that taketh away thy goods] Not by force, but by consent, having either lent them, or sold them to him: for if they were taken away by force, the person so taking them, was to be deemed a thief and a robber, and to be treated as such; but one that takes them by agreement, and is not able to make a return of them, or to give a valuable consideration for them, of such an one

Ask them not again] Do not exact or demand them, but give him a release, as the law requires, in Deut. xv. 2. which seems to be respected here; and where the same word is used by the Septuagint, as here.

31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

In matters of justice and beneficence, were they in your case, and you in theirs;

Do ye also to them likewise] A golden rule this, agreeable to the light of nature, and divine revelation, and is the sum and substance of the law and the prophets; see the note on Matt. vii. 12.

32 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

Or, "what grace have ye?" this is no fruit, nor evidence of grace, nor any exercise of the true grace of love; nor is it any favour conferred upon the object loved, which deserves the respect shown, nor can any reward be expected for such treatment: and thus it is expressed in Matthew, *What reward*

reward have ye? and the Arabic version renders it so here;

For sinners also love those that love them] Men that are destitute of the grace of God, profligate sinners, even the worst of them, such as publicans, do this; see the note on *Matthew* v. 46.

33 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

As one good turn deserves another:

What thank have ye?] What grace or goodness is there in such an action? What glory or merit is there in it?

For sinners also do even the same] Wherefore no man should conclude himself a righteous man, or better than sinners, on such an account: this is to be found among the worst of men, and is natural to them, unless they are brutes indeed, to be kind to such as are kind to them. And yet, this was the whole of the doctrine of the Jews about doing good to men: for so they say (*k*), "An Israelite is obliged to do good to an Israelite his companion, and to lend without usury: this is kindness and goodness, and a greater good it is than a gift; for many men are ashamed to take a gift, and are not ashamed to take a loan: but not so an Israelite to a Gentile; for he is not bound to do good, or shew kindness to him, or to lend him his money freely; for many of them hate the Israelites: but it must be owned, that if a Gentile does a kindness, or good, to an Israelite; the Israelite is also bound to shew kindness to him, and do him good." In direct opposition to such narrow sentiments does our Lord deliver himself in this, and the following verses.

34 And if ye lend to *them* of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

The same again, as from their brethren the Jews; or usury, as from the Gentiles:

What thank have ye?] And yet they looked upon this, in the first instance of it, as a very great kindness, and act of goodness, as appears from the above citation:

For sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again] Or "what is equal," and answerable to what they have lent them; that is, the same, or what is equivalent to it.

35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be

the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

As before urged in *ψ*. 27.

And do good and lend] Not to your friends only, but to your enemies:

Hoping for nothing again] Either principal or interest, despairing of seeing either; lending to such persons, from whom, in all appearance, it is never to be expected again. The Persian version renders it, "that ye may not cause any to despair;" and the Syriac version, "that ye may not cut off or cause to cease the hope of men;" and the Arabic version, "that ye do not deceive the hope of any;" that is, by sending such away, without lending to them, who come big with expectations of succeeding:

And your reward shall be great] God will bless you in your worldly substance here, and will not forget your beneficence hereafter:

And ye shall be the children of the Highest] That is, of God; one of whose names is, *עליון* "the most High;" see *Psalms* lxxxii. 6. the meaning is, that such who from principles of grace, and with right views, do such acts of kindness and beneficence to their fellow-creatures and christians, shall be made manifest, and declared to be the children of God; since they will appear to be born of him, and made partakers of the divine nature, and bear a resemblance to him, by their imitating him:

For he is kind to the unthankful, and to the evil] By causing his sun to rise, and his rain to fall on them, as on the righteous and the good; for as the Jews (*l*) observe, "There is no difference with him, whether on the right hand or the left; for, he is gracious, and does good, even to the ungodly." And elsewhere they say (*m*), that "He does good, and feeds the righteous and the ungodly."

36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

Be ye tender-hearted, kind, beneficent to all men, friends and foes:

As your Father also is merciful] That is, your Father which is in heaven; who is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works: nothing is more common in *Zohar* (*n*), and the *Talmud* (*o*), than to express the divine Being by no other name than *the merciful*; as, *רחמימ אמו* "the merciful" said so, and so; that is, God: and so the Arabians generally begin their books and chapters with these

(*l*) R. Abraham ben Dior. in *Sepher Jetzira*, p. 19.

(*m*) *Zohar* in *Exod.* fol. 69. 2, 3.

(*n*) *Zohar* in *Lev.* fol. 2. 2. & 9. 4. & 20. 1. & 22. 1.

(*o*) T. Bab. *Moed Katon*, fol. 15. 2.

(*k*) Kimchi in *Psal.* xv. *apud* Hulf. *Theolog. Jud.* par. 1. p. 420.

these words, "In the name of God, exceeding merciful; or the merciful commiserator:" a saying much like to this in the text is in the Targum of Jonathan, on *Lev. xxii. 28*. "O my people, the children of Israel, as your Father, רחמן "is merciful in heaven," so be ye merciful on earth."

37 Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

See the note on *Matt. vii. 1*.

Condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned] Censure not mens persons, and judge not their state, or adjudge them to condemnation for every offence in practice, or because they differ in principle, lest you should be treated in likemanner by others; and especially, lest you should fall under the righteous censure, judgment, and condemnation of God:

Forgive] Offences and trespasses committed against you, bear with, and pass by injuries and affronts:

And ye shall be forgiven] Of God; see the note on *Matt. vi. 14*.

38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again.

Give liberally of your worldly substance to indigent persons, as you have an opportunity, according to your ability, and as cases require; and it shall be returned again to great advantage, with great recompence, either in temporals or spirituals, or both:

Good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom] The allusion is to dry measure among the Jews, for to liquids the terms used will not agree; and which, though right and full, which is here called *good measure*, they thrust and pressed to make it hold more; and shook it also for the same purpose, and then heaped it up as much as they could, till it fell over: of all these methods used in measuring, we have instances in their writings, which may serve to illustrate this passage: it is said of (p) one, that "He measured, במדד נפושד "with measure pressed down; and therefore they measured to him, with "measure pressed down." Some of their measures they heaped, and some they did not: they say (q), "All the measures which were in the sanctuary, גבדושוור "were heaped," except the high priest's,

"and his heap was contained in it." And elsewhere (r), they observe, that "There were two decimaries (or tithing vessels) in the sanctuary, one was, גרש heaped, and the other was מרוק stricken: with "that which was heaped they measured all the fine flour for the meat-offerings, and with the stricken "that which was for the cakes of the high priest." With respect to this distinction of measures, they say it is a tradition of the Rabbins (s), "that they "do not strike in the place where they heap, nor "heap in the place where they strike." Between these two measures there was another, which was full measure and just, and right, without heaping, or striking (t). "R. Papa inquired, whether the "handful (of sweet incense the high priest took "on the day of atonement) which is spoken of "Leviticus xvi. 12. was of stricken, or heaped measure; R. Abba said to R. Ase, Come, hear, the "handful spoken of, is neither of stricken nor heaped measure, אליו חפופו "but of equal measure; sufficiently full, and no more." Dr Lightfoot reads it, מושוור "flowing over;" by what authority I cannot say; though the gloss says, the word signifies, "flowing over, by reason of its "height." But flowing or running over measure, was the same with that which was heaped, as appears from the following instance (u): "All "those that, חספסין במדד גסו cause to abound, "or run over with the great measure," it is lawful for them to sell that, of which it is doubted "whether it has been tithed or no; and these are "they, that cause to run over, or heap with the "great measure, as cornfactors and fruiterers." Who buy corn and fruits to sell again, and which they buy by the large measure, and fill it up, add unto it, and heap it up; and so get more than what is properly due unto them, as the commentators observe (x): would you know the quantity of the heap, or that which ran over, or the difference between even measure and that which was heaped; learn it from hence: in 1 Kings vii. 26. it is said, the molten sea held two thousand baths, and in 2 Chron. iv. 5. three thousand baths; which difficulty the Jewish writers solve this way, by observing, that the former text is to be understood of liquid measure, and the latter of dry measure, which was heaped: hence says R. Abai, we learn that, גרש חלתהו "the heap is the third part of the "measure (y):" now to this superabundant measure Christ here refers; and signifies, that a large compensation should be made to such, who give liberally

(p) T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 107. 2. T. Hierof. Yebamot, fol. 23. 3. (q) Mifn. Menachot, c. 9. §. 5.

(r) T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 87. 1. 2. (s) T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 89. 1. (t) T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 48. 1. (u) Mifn. Demai, c. 2. §. 4. (x) Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. (y) T. Bab. Eruvin, fol. 14. 2. Vid. Targum, Jarchi, Kimchi, & R. Levi ben Gershom, in 1 Kings vii. 26. Bemidbar Rabba, §. 11. fol. 204. 3.

liberally and generously to needy persons; that as they abounded in their acts of beneficence, so an overflowing plenty of good things should be returned to them: and when he says, that this should be *given into their bosom*, he alludes to the long and large garments the Jews wore, into which they were capable of receiving large lapsfuls of good things: the words may be read impersonally, *shall be given into your bosom*; or if personally, they may be understood of God, angels, and men, in different senses: the phrase *spoken together*, is not in the Syriac and Perfic versions:

For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again] A common proverb with the Jews; see the note on *Matt.* vii. 2.

39 And he spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?

The Vulgate Latin reads, "he spake also a parable unto them;" besides what he had said; and the Arabic version renders it, "another similitude, parable, or proverb," distinct from the comparisons, allusions, and proverbial expressions in the preceding verses. Though it should be observed, that these words were not spoken at the same time, nor on the mount, as the foregoing were; but this, and what follow, are a collection of various expressions of Christ at different times, some delivered on the mount, and others elsewhere; unless it should be rather thought, that these proverbs and sentences were repeated at different places and times, which is not improbable:

Can the blind lead the blind?] They may do so, as the blind scribes and Pharisees led the blind people of the Jews, which is what our Lord intends: but if they do, as they did,

Shall they not both fall into the ditch?] Yes, verily, what else can be expected? see the note on *Matt.* xv. 14.

40 The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.

Or "more excellent," as the Syriac, Arabic, and Perfic versions render it; that is, in learning and knowledge; if the master is ignorant, the scholar will be so too: and thus it is with teachers, and their people under their care; if the leaders are blind and ignorant, those under their instructions will remain so likewise. These words are an illustration of the preceding parable, and are used to another purpose here than in *Matt.* x. 24. see the note there.

But every one that is perfect shall be as his master] The Vulgate Latin reads it, "every one shall be

"perfect if he is as his master;" that is, if his master is a man of general learning, and a complete scholar, if he is like him, he will be so too: the Perfic version renders it, "every disciple that desires perfection shall be as his master:" whoever is ambitious of being a thorough scholar, and is diligent and industrious, by all ways and means to obtain such a character, shall be even as good an one as his master, under whom he learns, and better he cannot well expect to be; and this is sufficient: and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "is it not enough that every one be as his master?" agreeable to *Matthew* x. 25. see the note there. Maimonides (z) has an expression much like this: "He that learns shall not be greater than he of whom he learns, but shall be, כמותו "as he." Christ, in this last clause, seems to design his own disciples, who, when perfect in knowledge, which is not to be expected in this state, unless in a comparative sense, will be like himself.

41 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

A lesser sin in comparison of others; for all sins are not alike, as the Stoics asserted: and though none are to be countenanced and indulged, yet some are not so severely to be animadverted upon as others, the nature, occasions, circumstances and aggravations considered; for no man is perfect, or wholly free from sin; nor are the words preceding to be understood of such a perfection; for which reason perhaps these words, with what follow, are mentioned:

But perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye] Meaning a greater sin, that such are guilty of, who are inquisitive searchers into the faults of others, and severe animadvertisers on them; and yet are blind to their own iniquities, and take no notice of them. These proverbial expressions were delivered by Christ on the mount, and are the same with those in *Matt.* vii. 3—5. see the notes there.

42 Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.

Who is guilty of the lesser sin;

Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye] That is, suffer me to reprove thee for thy sin: the

(z) In *Mishna*, Bava Kama, c. 2, §. 5.

the word *brother* is omitted in the Cambridge copy of Beza's, and in the Perfic version; nor is it in Matthew; but in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions it is read, *my brother*; pretending great affection and sincerity:

When thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye?] That is, takest no notice of, and dost not refrain from a greater iniquity continued in:

Thou hypocrite] As such an one must be, that bears hard upon his brother, and severely censures him for a small crime, when he indulges in himself a far more abominable sin:

Cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye] The sense is, that a man should first reform himself, and then others.

43 For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

The particle *for* is left out in the Syriac, Arabic, Perfic, and Ethiopic versions; and so it is in Beza's ancient copy: nor do these words stand in close connexion with the preceding in Matthew's Gospel, though they may be very well considered as an illustration of them; for as that cannot be called a good tree, which brings forth bad fruit; so such men cannot be accounted good men, let them make ever so large pretensions to such a character, who are very busy in espying, discovering, and censuring the faults of their brethren; when they take no notice of, nor refrain from, nor relinquish their own. These words, with what follow in this and the next verse, and the similes in them, are used by our Lord in Matthew, on account of false prophets or teachers; where he suggests, that as good and faithful ministers of the Gospel cannot, and do not bring forth, and publish corrupt notions, and false doctrines, usually and knowingly; even as it is not usual, nor can it be, that a good tree should bring forth corrupt fruit; so,

Neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit] Or men of corrupt minds deliver good and sound doctrine, or the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ: but here they seem to be applicable to other persons, even true believers and hypocrites; the former are comparable to good trees, and are called trees of righteousness, which being planted by the river of the love of God, and rooted in Christ, and filled with the fruits of righteousness by him, do not bring forth the evil fruit of sin, as the common and constant course of their lives and conversations; for that they never commit sin, or are entirely without it, cannot be said; but sin is not their usual and common practice, or they do not live in sin: and the latter, hypocrites, who

pretend to a great deal of religion, and have none that is true and real; these are comparable to corrupt trees, which, though they may make a fair shew, yet do not bring forth good fruit, or perform works of righteousness which are truly such; what they do have only the appearance of good works, and are not properly so; see the notes on *Matt. vii. 16—18.*

44 For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.

Good and bad preachers are known by their doctrines, the one being agreeable, the other disagreeable to the word of God; and good and bad men are known by their lives and conversations: the grace of God revealed to good men, and wrought in them, teaches them to live *soberly, righteously, and godly*; a holy life is the fruit of grace, and an evidence of it; and the wickedness that is in the heart of unregenerate men, and even the hypocrisy of formal professors, will shew themselves in the common and ordinary course of their conversations:

For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes] Nor can they be expected from them: and no more can an unregenerate man perform good works, or bring forth fruits of righteousness acceptable unto God; for these require a knowledge of his will, obedience to it, a principle of grace, love to God, faith in Christ, and a view to the glory of God; all which are wanting in such a person.

45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

This, because of its suitableness and agreement with what goes before, is placed by Luke here; though, according to Matthew, it was spoken at another time and place, unless it should be a repetition there; see the note on *Matthew xii. 35.*

For of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh] The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, Ethiopic, Syriac, and Perfic versions, leave out the word *his*; and the two latter read *lips*, instead of *mouth*; see the note on *Matt. xii. 34.*

46 ¶ And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

Or, "my Lord, my Lord," as the Syriac version renders it; acknowledging in words his government

ment over them; claiming an interest in him, and making use of his name and authority:

And do not the things which I say] Or *command*; and therefore such words in their mouths would be of no use to them, since they neither did his Father's will, which he taught them, nor observed his commands and ordinances, which he enjoined them; and therefore should not enter into the kingdom of heaven, nor be owned by him another day, but should be bid to depart from him; see the notes on *Matt. vii. 21—23.*

47 *Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like:*

Cometh to be a disciple and follower:

And heareth my sayings, and doeth them] See the note on *Matt. vii. 24.*

I will shew you to whom he is like] Or “to what thing he is like;” so the Syriac and Arabic versions; though what follows seems better to agree with *person* than *thing*.

48 *He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.*

That is, who intended to build one, having drawn the scheme of it in his mind, and provided materials, and fixed upon the spot of ground:

And digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock] That is, he dug deep in the earth, till he came at a rock, and there, and then, he laid the foundation of his house; in which he acted the part of a wise man, as he is called in Matthew: so a sensible finner, desirous of building his soul, and the salvation of it, on a sure bottom, digs deep into the scriptures, diligently searches them, till he finds out the scheme of salvation by Christ; which lies deep in God's counsel and covenant, was ordained before the world began, and was hid in God till revealed in the Gospel: and finding Christ to be the rock of ages, in whom is everlasting strength, and the foundation which God has laid, nor is there another; he makes use of him as such, and builds the hope of his eternal salvation on him:

And when the flood arose] An inundation, a multitude of waters, the swelling of the sea; or rather “when it was tide,” as the word here used signifies (a):

The stream beat vehemently upon that house] Or the river, up which the tide came, dashed and broke

against it; by which may be signified the temptations of Satan, the persecutions of the world, the corruptions of mens hearts, and the errors and heresies of false teachers:

And could not shake it] As none of these can so shake as to move a soul, thus built on Christ, off of him the foundation:

For it was founded upon a rock] See the notes on *Matt. vii. 24, 25.*

49 *But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.*

He that hears Christ's sayings externally, but does not obey his commands:

Is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth] That is, without digging for a foundation, built his house upon the surface of the earth; “upon the dust of it;” as the Syriac version renders it; or *upon the sand*, as Matthew says:

Against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great] See the notes on *Matt. vii. 26, 27.*

CHAP. VII.

In this chapter we have an account of Christ's healing the centurion's servant; and commending his faith, v. 1—10. Raiseth to life the widow's son at Nain from the dead, v. 11—17. Answereth the questions of John's disciples, and proveth by his works that he is the Messiah, v. 18—23. Commendeth the office of John, v. 24—28. The publicans justify God, but the Pharisees condemn his counsel, v. 29, 30. Christ upbraideth the Jews wicked censures, under the similitude of Children's practice in the market, v. 31—35. Eating in Simon's house, a woman washeth his feet with her tears: Simon is offended at it: Christ defendeth her by a similitude of two debtors, v. 36—50.

NOW when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.

That is, when Jesus, as the Persic version expresses it, “had finished all the above sayings,” doctrines, and instructions; not all that he had to say, for he said many things after this:

In the audience of the people] Of the common people, the multitude, besides the disciples; and that openly, and publicly, and with a loud and clear voice, that all might hear:

(a) Vid. Rivinum de Venilia Sabena, &c. p. 681, 682.

He entered into Capernaum] Jesus entered, as the Syriac version reads, "into his own city," and where he had been before, and wrought miracles.

2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.

The same that Matthew makes mention of, chapter viii. 5, 6. see the notes there:

Who was dear unto him] To the centurion, being an honest, upright, faithful, and obliging servant; as Tabi was to Rabban Gamaliel, of whom his master said (a), "Tabi my servant, is not as other servants, כשר הוּא" "he is upright."

Was sick] Of a palsy; see *Matt.* viii. 6.

And ready to die] In all appearance; his case was desperate, and there was no help for him by any human means, which makes the following cure the more remarkable.

3 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.

Heard that he was come, as the Ethiopic version adds, "into the city of Capernaum;" or of his miracles, which he had done there, and elsewhere:

He sent unto him the elders of the Jews] In whom he had an interest; judging himself, being a Gentile, very unworthy and unfit to go to Christ, and ask a favour of so great a person as he was; such were his modesty and humility. These elders he sent, were not the more ancient inhabitants of the city, called, וְקַנֵּי עַם הָעִיר "the elders of, or among the common people;" as distinguished from, וְקַנֵּי תוֹרָה "the elders of the law;" or those that were old in knowledge; of both which it is said by R. Simeon ben Achaia (b), that "The elders of the common people, when they grow old, their knowledge fails in them, as it is said, *Job* xii. 20. but so it is not with the elders of the law;" but when they grow old, their knowledge rests in them, as it is said, *Job* xii. 12." But these were either some principal officers of the city, called the elders of the people elsewhere; particularly, who were members of the sanhedrim; for as elders, when they design the elders in Jerusalem, mean the great sanhedrim (c) there; so elders in other places, intend the sanhedrim, consisting of twenty-one persons, or the bench of three; and such were these the centurion sent to Christ:

Beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant] He besought him most earnestly by these

messengers, that he would come to his house, and cure his servant of the palsy, by laying his hands on him, or commanding the distemper off, by a word speaking; or in what way he should think fit; for he made no doubt that he was able to heal him.

4 And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this:

Came to that part of the city where he was; either at Peter's house, where he used to be when in this place; or rather it might be as he was passing along the streets, that they came up to him:

They besought him instantly] Or with great vehemence and importunity; very studiously and carefully they urged the case, and pressed him much to it:

Saying, He was worthy for whom he should do this] Or, "for whom thou shouldst do this;" as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Perfic, and Ethiopic versions read, and some copies; and which reading connects the words best. This speech of theirs, favours of their pharisaic tenet and notion of merit, and is very different from the sense the poor centurion had of himself.

5 For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.

The Jewish nation, which was Christ's nation, as well as theirs, he being a Jew; see *John* xviii. 35. This they mention, as an argument to induce him to have a regard to the centurion, though he was a Gentile; since he was a friend of the Jews, and well affected and disposed to them, which was very rare: it was not common for the Gentiles to love the Jews, any more than the Jews the Gentiles; there was an hatred, yea, an enmity between them: but this man, very likely, was a proselyte to their religion, as the following instance seems to shew:

And he hath built us a synagogue] At his own private charge, and by the assistance of his soldiers under him, whom he might employ in this work: sometimes a single person built a synagogue at his own expence, and gave it to the citizens; of which the Jews say (d), "If a man builds an house, and afterwards devotes it to a synagogue, it as is a synagogue."

6 Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof:

Went

(a) T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 16. 2.

(b) Misn. Kenim, c. 3. §. 6.

(c) T. Hieros. Sota, fol. 23. 3.

(d) Talm. Hieros. Megilla, v. 4. art. 10.

Went with the elders of the Jews, towards the centurion's house, after hearing their request, and their reasons for it; and that without any reluctance, he at once complied, made no hesitation, or difficulty about it, but went with them very reely:

And when he was now not far from the house] Of the centurion, where his servant lay sick; he having some notice of his coming, and of his being near his house, in his great humility, and being conscious to himself of his unworthiness to have such a person under his roof, sent messengers to prevent him:

The centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself] Or do not fatigue thyself by coming to the house, stop, go no further;

For I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof] He might know full well the law of the Jews, that it was not lawful for a Jew to go into the house of an uncircumcised Gentile; and though he might be a proselyte of righteousness, and so his house was free of entrance, yet considering his own meanness, and the greatness of Christ, who was become so famous for his doctrines and miracles, he thought it too great a stoop for Christ to come into his house, and too high a favour for him to enjoy.

7 Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.

To come in person; therefore he sent the elders of the Jews to him first, and now some of his friends, who delivered these words in his name:

But say in a word, and my servant shall be healed] Speak but the word only, rebuke the distemper, command it off, and it will be gone; so great was his faith in the power of Christ.

8 For I am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this; and he doeth it.

Under the Roman senate; or "belonging to the emperor;" as the Arabic version renders it; and under the command of a tribune, as a centurion was: so that this is not an amplification, but a diminution of his office; and his sense is, that even he, who was but an inferior officer, yet had such power as after-related:

Having under me soldiers] An hundred or more:

And I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come; and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this; and he doeth it] As this his servant used to do, and whom he may intend, who now lay sick;

and therefore was dear unto him. His meaning is, that Christ could as easily command, and call off a distemper, and it would obey him, as he could command obedience from his soldiers and servants, and have it, and more so.

9 When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

Heard what the friends of the centurion related from him, and in his name; or which he himself delivered, coming up to Christ after them:

He marvelled at him] At his great humility and modesty, and the strength of his faith, and his manner of reasoning:

And turned him about] From him and his friends:

And said unto the people that followed him] From the mount to Capernaum, and as he was passing along the streets:

I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel] Or, "among the Israelites;" as the Syriac; or, "among the children of Israel," as the Persian; or, "in all Israel;" as the Arabic version reads, as he did in this single Gentile; see the note on *Matt. viii. 10*.

10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

Both the elders of the Jews, and the friends of the centurion:

Returning to the house] Of the centurion, where his servant lay, and from whence they came:

Found the servant whole that had been sick] For he was healed directly, as soon as the centurion had expressed his faith, and Christ had declared that it should be according to it, *Matt. viii. 13*.

11 ¶ And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.

The Vulgate Latin reads "afterward," not expressing any day, as in chapter viii. 1. but the Syriac, Arabic, Persian and Ethiopic versions, read to the same sense as we, "the day after, the next day, on the morrow," after he had cured the centurion's servant in Capernaum, where he staid all night:

That he went into a city called Nain] Which Jerom (e) places near mount Tabor, and the river

N 2

Kison.

(e) Tom. 1, ad Marcellum, fol. 44. B. & Epitaphi. Pauli, fol. 60. A.

Kifon. The (f) Jews speak of a Naim in the tribe of Issachar, so called from its pleasantness, and which seems to be the same place with this. The Persic version reads it, *Nabetis*, or *Neapolis*, the same with *Sychem* in Samaria, but without reason:

And many of the disciples went with him] Not only the twelve, but many others:

And much people] From Capernaum, and other parts, that followed him to see his miracles, or for one end or another, though they did not believe in him; at least these were only hearers, and had not entered themselves among the disciples.

12 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

The city of Naim:

Behold, there was a dead man carried out] Of the city; for they used not to bury in cities, but in places without, and at some distance: the burying-places of the Jews were not near their cities (g); and they had different ways of carrying them out to be buried, according to their different ages: a child under a month old, was carried out in the bosom of a person; if a full month old, in a little coffin, which they carried in their arms; one of a twelvemonth old, was carried in a little coffin on the shoulder; and one of three years old, on a bier or bed (h), and so upwards; and in this manner was this corps carried out: who was

The only son of his mother] Hence the sorrow and mourning were the greater; see *Zech. xii. 10.*

And she was a widow] And if she had been supported by her son, her loss was very considerable; and having neither husband nor son, to do for her, her case was very affecting:

And much people of the city was with her] According to the age of persons, was the company that attended them to the grave: if it was an infant, not a month old, it was buried by one woman, and two men, but not by one man, and two women; if a month old, by men and women; and whoever was carried out on a bier or bed, many mourned for him; and whoever was known to many, many accompanied him (i); and which was the case of this dead man: he seems to have been well known and respected by the company that attended him to his grave; of these some were bearers, and these had their deputies, and these again theirs; for as they carried their dead a great way,

they were obliged often to change their bearers; and of the company, some went before the bier, and others went after it (k): besides, what served to increase the company at a funeral was, that it was looked upon as an act of kindness and mercy to follow a corps to the grave (l); to which may be added, and what must always tend to increase the number at such a time, that, according to the Jewish canons (m), "It was forbidden to do any work at the time a dead man was buried, even one of the common people."

13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

Knowing her case, that she was a widow, and had lost her only son:

And said unto her, Weep not] Signifying, that he would help her, which he did, without being asked to do it, as usual in other cases.

14 And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

Or *bed*, as the Syriac version renders it; and such was *נומ* "the bier, or bed," on which one of three years old, and upward, was carried, as abovementioned: so that on which Herod was carried to his grave is called *נומ*, "a bed," by Josephus (n). For the bed or bier, of what sort it was that they carried out their dead upon, take the following account (o): "Formerly the rich carried out (their dead) upon a bed called *Dargab*, (which is said (p) to be a bed that was not platted with ropes, and is called a bed of fortune (q); and the poor carried out (their dead) upon one that was called *Calicab* (or *Celibah*, as sometimes read.) To this Christ came near, and touched it: not that by his touching of that, the dead should be raised; but this he did as a signal, that the bearers should stop. The Jews (r) say, one of the charges that Jacob gave to his sons before his death, was, to "Take care, says he, that no uncircumcised person, *אחרי כבודי* "touch my bed, or bier," lest the Shekinah remove from me." From whence it should seem, that a circumcised person, as Christ was, might touch a bier without offence, or hurt, and without contracting any ceremonial pollution: to touch a dead body, or the bone of man, or a grave, was forbidden by the

(k) Vid. Mifn. Beracot, c. 3. §. 1. (l) Maimon. in Mifn. Pesah, c. 7. §. 1. (m) Pitke Tosephot Megilla, art. 106.

T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 27. 2. (n) De Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 33. §. 11. (o) T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 27. 1. 2.

(p) T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 5. 4. (q) T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 56. 2. Vid. R. Sampson & Bartenora in Mifn. Para, c. 12. §. 9. (r) Bereshit Rabba, §. 100. fol. 37. 4.

(f) Bereshit Rabba, §. 98. fol. 86. 1.

(g) T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 80. 2. Gloss.

(h) T. Moed Katon, fol. 24. 1. 2. & Kiddushin, fol. 80. 2. Massech. Semachot, c. 3. §. 2. 3.

Maimoni Hilcho Ebel, c. 12. §. 10. 11. (i) Ut in locis supra citatis.

the law, *Numb. xix. 16.* and so, according to the traditions of the elders (*s*), the stone that was rolled at the mouth of the sepulchre, and the side of the sepulchre, defiled by touching; but I do not find that touching a bier was ever forbidden.

And they that bare him stood still] These are they that are called *נושאי המטה* "the bearers of the bed, or bier:" and Maimonides (*t*) says, "They carry the dead upon their shoulders to the grave; and the bearers of the bier" are forbidden to put on their sandals, lest the latchet of any one of them should fail, and should be found to hinder him doing his duty." And elsewhere it is said (*u*), "The bearers of the bed, or bier," and their deputies, and their deputies deputies, both before the bier and after it, and whoever the bier stood in need of, were free," that is, from reading the *Shema*, or, *Hear, O Israel*, &c. and from prayer: the reason of their having so many bearers was, because they carried the dead a great way to be buried. King Herod was carried after this manner two hundred furlongs from Jerusalem to the castle of Herodion (*x*):

And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise] The Ethiopic version adds, "and he arose:" Christ spoke as one that had the keys of death and the grave; and divine power went along with his words, which raised the dead man to life: and full proof this is of the true and proper Deity of Christ.

15 And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

He that had been dead, (though he was now alive) as it was a clear case to all his relations and friends, or they would never have brought him out to bury him:

Sat up] Upon the bed, or bier:

And began to speak] Both which, his sitting up and speaking, were plain proofs of his being brought to life:

And he delivered him to his mother] For whose sake he raised him from the dead, commiserating her case: wherefore as Christ shewed his power in raising the dead man, he discovered great humanity, kindness, and tenderness in delivering him alive to his mother; which might be done after he came off the bier, by taking him by the hand, and leading him to his mother, and giving him up into her arms. Think what an affecting scene this must be!

16 And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and that God hath visited his people.

On all that were there present, and heard, and saw what was done. Not a fear of dread, and terror, and of punishment, as in devils and wicked men; but a fear and reverence of the divine Majesty, whose power and presence they were sensible must be there at that time:

And they glorified God] They praised him, and gave thanks to him, ascribing this amazing action to divine power, and gave God the glory of it; and blessed him for the Messiah, who was sent unto them, as they concluded Jesus to be, from this wonderful instance:

Saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us] Even that great prophet Moses wrote of, and said should be raised up from among the children of Israel, *Deut. xviii. 15, 18.*

And that God hath visited his people] The Arabic version adds, "for good." For God sometimes visits for evil, in a way of wrath and sore displeasure; but this was a visitation for good: they concluded that God had looked upon them with a look of love, and had a gracious regard to them, and had sent them the Messiah, who, they hoped, would deliver them from the Roman yoke; as he had formerly looked upon, and visited their fathers, and sent a redeemer to them, to deliver them from Egyptian bondage. The Ethiopic version renders it, "and God hath mercy on his people;" and the Persian version, "God hath looked upon his people, and hath taken care of them."

17 And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about.

Or the report of this surprising miracle in raising a dead man to life, that was carrying to his grave,

Went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about] Not only Judea, and the several cities, towns, and villages in it, but all the country round about it, especially Galilee. The Persian version reads, "all countries which are round about Jordan;" see *Matt. iii. 5.*

18 ¶ And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.

Of the miracles that were wrought by Christ; particularly the healing of the centurion's servant, and the raising from the dead the widow of Naim's son, and what fame and reputation Christ got every where by his doctrine, and mighty works. John was now in prison, when these his disciples came and related these things to him; see *Matt. xii. 2.* and they spoke of them, not as commending Christ for them; but as envying, grieving, and complaining, that he carried away all the honour and glory from John their master, for whom they had the greatest regard.

19 And

(*s*) *Mish. Oholot*, c. 2. §. 4.

(*u*) *Mish. Beracot*, c. 3. §. 1.

(*t*) *Hilchot. Ebel*, c. 4. §. 2, 3.

(*x*) *Josephus*, ut *supra*.

19 And John calling *unto him* two of his disciples sent *them* to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

Two, which were a sufficient number to be sent on an errand, to ask a question, and report the answer, or bear witness to any fact they should see, or hear done.

Sent them unto Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?] Not that he doubted that Jesus was the Messiah; nor was it for his own satisfaction so much that he sent these disciples of his with this question, but for theirs; and to remove all doubt and hesitation from them about Christ.

20 When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

Come to Jesus; "these two men," as the Arabic version reads; "the disciples," as the Persian version; the same that John sent from the castle of Machærus, where he was now a prisoner, to Christ, who was teaching in some city or town of Galilee:

They said, John the Baptist] So well known by his being the administrator of the ordinance of baptism:

Hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?] See the note on Matt. xi. 3.

21 And in the same hour he cured many of *their* infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight.

Or at that same time, for a precise hour is not intended: one exemplar reads, "in that day," in which these men came to Christ, *he*, Jesus, as the Persian version expresses it,

Cured many of their infirmities] Bodily weaknesses and disorders:

And plagues] Which were inflicted on them as scourges and corrections for sin, very severe diseases, as epilepsies, leprosies, palsies, &c.

And of evil spirits]. Or devils, which he disposed and commanded out of the bodies of men; though sometimes evil spirits with the Jews signify some kinds of bodily diseases: as when it is said (y), "Whoever puts out a lamp because he is afraid of Gentiles, or of thieves, or of *רוח רע* "an evil spirit," or because of a sick man "that is asleep, he is free." Upon which Maimonides observes, "*An evil spirit* they call all kinds

(y) M. in Sabbat, c. 2. §. 5. Vid. Maimon. Hilchot Gerushin, c. 2. §. 14.

"of diseases, which, in the Arabic language, go by the name of *melancholy*; for it is one kind of the diseases mentioned, which makes a sick man to fly, and separate himself from mankind, as if he was afraid of the light, or of coming into the company of men."

And unto many that were blind he gave sight] Freely as an act of grace and kindness, as the word signifies, without any merit, or motive in them.

22 Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached.

Said, "to the disciples," as the Persian; "to both," as the Arabic: when he had wrought these cures he turned himself to the disciples of John, and made answer to their question. The Vulgate Latin leaves out the word *Jesus*, rendering it, "and he answering;" in the following words:

Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard] They had just seen many cured of infirmities, plagues, and evil spirits, and they had heard the doctrines of the Gospel preached by him; and the former were in confirmation of the latter, and both were proofs of his being the Messiah: the particulars of which follow,

How that the blind see] That is, they that had been blind, and some that were born blind, received their sight, which was what was never heard of before, from the beginning of the world; and which, as it is an instance of Christ's almighty power, shewing him to be God; so it was a fulfilment of a prophecy concerning him as the Messiah, who, when he came, was to open the eyes of the blind, *Isaiah xxxv. 5.* and this was true, not only in a corporal, but in a spiritual sense: and generally so it was, that when the blind received their bodily sight, they also received their spiritual sight; and both were evidences of the true Messiahship of our Lord Jesus.

The lame walk] These were among those who were cured of their infirmities; and this also was prophesied of the Messiah, and was now accomplished by Jesus, that *the lame man should leap as an hart*, *Isaiah xxxv. 6.* and so was to be considered by John and his disciples, as another proof of his being the true Messiah:

The lepers are cleansed] Of this sort were they who were cured of their plagues: the leprosy was called a plague; hence the treatise of leprosy, in the Mishna, is, by the Jews, called *Negam*, or *plagues*.

The deaf hear] So in the above prophecy in Isaiah, it is predicted, that *the ears of the deaf should be unstopped* in the days of the Messiah; and which therefore must be considered as a further confirmation of Jesus being he that was to come, and that another was not to be looked for.

The dead are raised] Whether there were any raised at this time, or no, is not certain; but certain it is, that there had been one raised from the dead, if not in the presence of these disciples, yet just before they came to Christ, of which John had been informed by some of his disciples, if not these; and of which an account is given before in this chapter, and which is what none but the mighty God can do.

To the poor the Gospel is preached] It was preached both by the poor, the disciples of Christ, and to the poor, mean, base, and illiterate among the Jews; and also to the poor, meek, and lowly in heart, as was prophesied should be, by the Messiah, *Isaiah lxi. 1.* so that put all together, here were undoubted proofs, and a full demonstration, that Jesus was the Messiah; see the notes on *Matt. xi. 4, 5.*

23 And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

The Arabic version renders it, "blessed is he that doubts not of me." The Persic and Ethiopic versions both add to the text, the former rendering the words thus, "blessed is he that is not brought into offence and doubt concerning me;" and the latter thus, "blessed are they who do not deny me, and are not offended in me:" particular regard is had to the disciples of John, who both doubted of Christ as the Messiah, and were offended at his popularity and success; see the note on *Matt. xi. 6.*

24 ¶ And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

The Syriac and Persic versions read, "the disciples of John;" and the Arabic version, "the two disciples of John;" the two that he sent, when they were gone back with the answer of Christ; *he*, Jesus, as the Persic version expresses it,

Began to speak unto the people concerning John] Not caring to say any thing about him to the messengers, or whilst they were present, lest he should be charged with flattery; see the note on *Matt. xi. 7.*

What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?] An inconsistent, wavering, and unstable man? If so, they were greatly

mistaken: Or the motions and gesture of the man? See the note as above.

25 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts.

If not his air and action, what was it? Was it his apparel and dress? Was it to see

A man clothed in soft raiment?] If this was the case, their labour was in vain, and they had their walk for nothing; for John was clothed with camel's hair, rough and undressed, and was girt with a leathern girdle; there was nothing in his person, mien, and garb, that was attractive:

They which are gorgeously apparelled] Or richly clothed, as John was not:

And live delicately] In the most elegant manner, and on the richest dainties, as John did not, his food being locusts and wild honey:

Are in kings' courts] And not in a wilderness, where John came preaching.

26 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

What led your curiosity to go into the wilderness after him, since it could not be any of the above things? Was it to see

A prophet?] Which was the case; for John was a prophet, and was known to be one; and the fame of him, as such, drew vast numbers to see and hear him, there not having been a prophet among the Jews for some hundreds of years:

Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet] Not that he was the prophet Moses did say should come; nor was he the priest that should arise with the Urim and Thummim, that the *Tirshatha* Nehemiah spoke of; nor was he the king Messiah; but he was his forerunner, he saw him, and baptized him, and so was greater than any of the prophets that went before him.

27 This is *he*, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

Written of in *Mal. iii. 1.* see the notes on *Matt. xi. 10.* and *Mark i. 2.*

28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women, there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

The word *prophet* is left out in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, as in *Matt. xi. 11.* see the note there.

29 And

29 And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

Either Christ saying these things in commendation of John, and gave their assent to them, and shewed their approbation of them, having been baptized by him; or rather, the people that had heard John preach the doctrines of repentance and faith, and of baptism; for these words seem rather to be the words of Christ, relating the success of John's ministry among different persons:

And the publicans justified God] Even those wicked men, who were before profligate and abandoned sinners, when they came under John's ministry, were so wrought upon by the power and grace of God through it, that they approved of, and applauded the wisdom, goodness, and grace of God, in sending such a prophet as John; in qualifying him in the manner he did, and in giving him a commission to preach such doctrines, and administer such an ordinance as he did: and this their approbation of the divine conduct, and their thankfulness for the same, they testified by their

Being baptized with the baptism of John] They expressed their sentiments, by their obedience; they declared it was right in God to institute such an ordinance, and for John to administer it; and that it became them to submit to it, as a part of righteousness to be fulfilled; they hereby signified, that they thought that it was agreeable to the nature of God, who is holy, just, and good, suitable to the Gospel-dispensation, and very fit and proper for them.

30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

Or *scribes*, as the Syriac and Persian versions read; for the scribes and lawyers were the same sort of persons. The Ethiopic version calls them, "the scribes of the city:" these

Rejected the counsel of God against themselves] Against their own advantage, to their hurt and detriment; since by their impenitence and unbelief, and through their rejection of Christ and his forerunner, and the Gospel and the ordinances of it, they brought ruin and destruction, both temporal and eternal, upon themselves: or *towards themselves, or unto them*; that is, they "rejected the command of God unto them," as the Arabic version renders it: for by the counsel of God here, is not meant his purpose, intention, and design, with respect to these persons, which was not, nor never is frustrated; but the precept of God, and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "they despised

"the command of God:" that is, the ordinance of baptism, which was of God, and the produce of his counsel and wisdom, as the whole scheme, and all the ordinances of the Gospel are, and not the invention of men: or they rejected this "in themselves," as it may be rendered, and is by the Syriac and Persian versions; not openly and publicly, for they were afraid of the people, but inwardly and privately, and which their actions and conduct declared:

Being not baptized of him] Of John: by their neglect of this ordinance, they testified their aversion to it and rejection of it.

31 ¶ And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?

This first clause is not in the Syriac, Arabic, Persian, and Ethiopic versions, nor in some copies, nor in Beza's most ancient copy; and being omitted, more clearly shews, that the two former verses are the words of Christ, and not an observation the Evangelist makes on the different behaviour of Christ's hearers, upon the commendation he had given of John:

Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation] Or "to what men shall I liken them," as the Persian version: the phrase *men of this generation*, is Rabbinical; so רבנים דער וועלט "the men of that generation," are more beautiful in work than these," says the Targumist on Eccl. vii. 11. *And to what are they like?*] To that which follows.

32 They are like unto children sitting in the market-place, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.

The Pharisees and lawyers, who rejected the counsel of God, and the baptism of John, were like to children; not for innocence, simplicity, meekness and humility; their characters were the reverse: but rather, for their ignorance, and want of understanding, their folly and weakness; nor are they here compared to the children that piped and mourned, but to those surly and ill-natured ones, who made no answer to those that did. They, together with Christ, and John the Baptist, are in general likened to children,

Sitting in the market-place] Where children were wont to be, there being a variety of persons and things to be seen; and which may design the temple, or the synagogues, or any place of concourse, where the Pharisees met, with John, Christ, and their disciples:

And

And calling one to another, and saying] They that were good-natured, and more disposed to mirth and innocent diversions :

We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept] They imitated the pipers at weddings, expecting their companions would have danced, as was usually done by the others, when the pipe was played upon; and they mimicked the mourning women at funerals, expecting their fellows would have made as though they had wept; whereas they would do neither, shewing a dislike both to the one and to the other. The children that imitated the pipers, represent Christ and his disciples, who delivered the joyful sound of the Gospel; and the children that acted the part of the mourners, signify John the Baptist, and his disciples, who preached the doctrine of repentance; and the children that would not join with, nor make any answer to the one, or the other, intend the scribes and Pharisees, who were not pleased with either of them, as the following words shew; see the notes on *Matt.* xi. 16, 17.

33 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

John is designed by the children that mourned in the above family, with whom his character and conduct agree; he preached very mournful doctrine, delivered it in a very solemn and awful manner, and lived a very austere life, and fasted much, as did also his disciples. The word *Baptist* is here added by Luke, which Matthew has not, to distinguish him from others; and it may be, because he had just spoke of his baptism. The Persian version only reads, *the Baptist*; of him our Lord says, that he

Came neither eating bread nor drinking wine] Both which were the common food and drink of men, but his diet was *locusts and wild honey*, and from this he often abstained; nor would he attend festivals and entertainments, or be free and sociable with men: *bread and wine* are here mentioned, which are not in Matthew:

And ye say, He hath a devil] Is mad, or melancholy; for madness and melancholy, or the hypochondriac disorder, was by them sometimes imputed to a diabolical possession and influence, as the cause of it; and though these men pretended to great austerity of life, and frequent fastings, yet John was too abstemious for them, and they could not agree with his doctrine, nor method of living; see the note on *Matt.* xi. 18.

34 The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous

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man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

That is, eating bread and drinking wine, as other people do; and shuns no man's company; goes to a wedding, dines with a Pharisee, and eats with publicans and sinners, and carries it freely and courteously to all men:

And ye say, Behold a gluttonous man and a winebibber] An epicure, a drunkard, a mere sot, one that gives up himself to sensual pleasures:

A friend of publicans and sinners] A good fellow, a boon companion, that sits with them, and encourages them in their revellings and drunkenness: such an ill use did the Jews make of our Lord's free, harmless, and innocent conversation with men; and in such a horrid manner did they traduce and vilify him, who was holy in his nature, harmless in his life, separate from sinners, knew no sin, nor ever committed any.

35 But wisdom is justified of all her children.

That is, Christ, who is the wisdom of God, and who acted the wise part, in behaving in such a free manner with all sorts of men, and even with publicans and sinners, whereby he became useful to their souls, called them to repentance, converted and saved them: and these are his children, which were given him by the Father; for whose sake he partook of flesh and blood, and whom he redeemed, that they might receive the adoption of children; and to whom, believing in him, he gives power to become the children of God: and these justify him from all such scandalous imputations; and by their lives and conversations shew, that the doctrine of Christ is not a licentious one, or leads to libertinism, and indulges men in their carnal, sensual lusts and pleasures; but on the contrary, teaches them to *deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly*: the word *all*, is inserted by Luke, which is not in Matthew; signifying, that this is the universal sense and practice of all the real offspring of Christ, the sons of wisdom, who are wise to do good.

36 ¶ And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

Whose name was Simon, *x.* 40, 43, 44.

Desired that he would eat with him] Take a meal with him, either a dinner or a supper: this he did under a disguise of respect, and shew of affection to him; though very likely with a design upon him to ensnare him, or take some advantage against him

O

if

if he could; for it is certain, that he did not treat him with those civilities and ceremonies commonly used to guests; see *ψ*. 44—46.

And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat] He made no hesitation about it, but at once accepted of his invitation, though he knew both the man and his intentions; having nothing to fear from him, and being willing to carry it courteously to all men, and give proof of what he had just now said of himself, *ψ*. 34.

37 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

Not Mary Magdalene, spoken of in the next chapter, *ψ*. 2. under another character; and is a different person, who had not been taken notice of by the Evangelist before; nor Mary the sister of Lazarus, who is said to anoint the feet of Christ, and wipe them with her hair, *John* xii. 3. The character given of this woman, does not seem so well to agree with her; at least, the fact here recorded cannot be the same with that; for this was in Galilee, and that in Bethany; this in the house of Simon the Pharisee, that in the house of Lazarus; this was some time before Christ's death, for after this he went a circuit through every city and village; that was but six days before his death, and after which he never went from those parts; nor is this account the same with the history recorded in *Matt.* xxvi. 6, 7. *Mark* xiv. 3. for that fact was done in Bethany also, this in Galilee; that in the house of Simon the leper, this in the house of Simon the Pharisee; that was but two days before the death of Christ, this a considerable time before; the ointment that woman poured, was poured upon his head, this upon his feet: who this woman was, is not certain, nor in what city she dwelt; it seems to be the same in which the Pharisee's house was; and was no doubt one of the cities of Galilee, as Naim, Capernaum, or some other at no great distance from these:

Which was a sinner] A notorious sinner, one that was known by all to have been a person of a wicked life and conversation; a lewd woman, a vile prostitute, an harlot, commonly reputed so: the Arabic word here used, signifies both a sinner and a *whore* (*z*); and so the word *sinners*, seems to be used elsewhere by Luke; see chapter xv. 1, 2. compared with *Matt.* xxi. 31, 32. Some think she was a Gentile, Gentiles being reckoned by the Jews sinners, and the worst of sinners; but this does not appear:

When she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house] Having observed it herself that he was invited by him, and went with him, or being informed of it by others,

Brought an alabaster box of ointment] Ointment was used to be put in vessels made of alabaster, which kept it pure and uncorrupt; and this stone was found about Damascus (*a*), so that there might be plenty of it in Judea; at least it might be easily had, and such boxes might be common; and as this woman appears to have been a lewd person, she might have this box of ointment by her to anoint herself with, that she might recommend herself to her gallants. The historian (*b*) reports, that "Venus gave to Phaon an alabaster box with ointment, with which Phaon being anointed, became the most beautiful of men, and the women of Mitylene were taken with the love of him." If this box had been provided with such a view, it was now used to another and quite different purpose.

38 And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head; and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

Christ lay upon a bed, or couch, as was the custom of the ancients, both Jews and others, at meals, with his feet put out behind; and between the couches and the walls of the room, there was a space for servants to wait and serve, and such are therefore said to *stand at the feet*; and the phrase is used, as descriptive of servants in waiting (*c*); and in such a situation this woman put herself, as being also ashamed and afraid to come before Christ, and look him in the face; and here she stood weeping for her sins, and melted down with the love of Christ to her soul, and at his discourse:

And began to wash his feet with tears] Which fell from her eyes in such abundance upon his feet, as she stood by him, that they were like a shower of rain, as the word signifies, with which his feet were as it were bathed and washed; his shoes or sandals being off, as was the custom at eating so to do, lest they should daub the couch or bed, on which they lay (*d*). Her tears she used instead of water; for it was the custom first to wash the feet before they were anointed with oil, which she intended to do; and for which purpose she had brought with her, an alabaster box of ointment. It is said (*e*) of one, "When he came home, that

(a) Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 36. c. 8.

(b) Elian, var. Hist. l. 12. c. 8.

(c) Vid. Alstorphium de lectis veterum, p. 106, 107.

(d) Ibid. p. 123, 124.

(e) T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 85. 2.

(z) Vid. Castell. Lex. Heptaglott. col. 1195.

“his maid brought him a pot of hot water; and
“he washed his hands and his feet in it; then she
“brought him a golden basin full of oil; and he
“dipped his hands and his feet in it, to fulfil what
“is said, *Deut. xxxiii. 24.* and after they had
“eaten and drank, he measured out oil, &c.”
And it is a general rule with the Jews (*f*), “That
“whoever anoints his feet, is obliged to washing
“or dipping.” *Num. xvi. 28.* *Sanhedrim, fol. 101.*

And did wipe them with the hairs of her head] Which were long, and hung loose about her shoulders, it being usual and comely for women to wear long hair, *1 Cor. xi. 15.* That which was her ornament and pride, and which she took great care of to nourish and put in proper form, to render her desirable, she uses instead of a towel, to wipe her Lord's feet, and her tears off of them. A like phrase is used of one by Apuleius, “*His verbis et amplexibus mollibus decantatus maritus, lacrymasque ejus suis crinibus detergens, &c.*” (*g*). “

And kissed his feet] This was no unusual practice with the Jews; we often read of it (*h*): “R. Jonathan and R. Jannai were sitting together, there came a certain man, *וְיָשָׁא וְיָשָׁא*” and “kissed the feet of R. Jonathan.” Again (*i*), “R. Meir stood up, and Bar Chama, *וְבַר חָמָא*” “kissed his knees, or feet.” This custom was also used by the Greeks and Romans among their civilities, and in their salutations (*k*):

And anointed them with the ointment] Which she brought with her.

39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

Simon, who had invited Christ to eat with him, when he saw what was done by the woman, how she stood at his feet, and washed them with her tears, and wiped them with her hairs, and then kissed and anointed them:

He spake within himself] Not openly and publicly, being in good manners, though not in real respect to Christ, unwilling to affront his guest; but turned these things over in his mind, and reasoned upon them within himself:

Saying, This man, if he were a prophet] As he was said and believed to be by many, but questioned by this Pharisee:

(*f*) T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 26. 2. Maimon. Hilchot Biath Hamikdash, c. 5. §. 5. (g) Metamorph. l. 5.

(*h*) T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 15. 4. & Kiddushin, fol. 61. 3. T. Bab. Cerubot, fol. 49. 2. Vid. ibid. fol. 63. 1.

(*i*) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 27. 2.

(*k*) Vid. Aristophanem in vespis, p. 473. Arian. Epist. l. 3. c. 26.

& Alex. ab Alex. Gen. Dier. l. 2. c. 49.

Would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him] He took it for granted, that Christ did not know this woman personally, that she was one of the city; nor her character, or “what was her fame,” as the Syriac version renders it, which was very ill; or “her condition,” as the Arabic version, she being not a religious person, but a notorious lewd one: this he concluded, from his admitting her to such nearness to him, and familiarity with him; and from hence argues within himself, that he could not be a prophet; since, according to his notion of a prophet, he must know persons and their characters; though this was not always requisite in a prophet, nor did the prophetic gift at all times shew itself in this way: however, this man reasoned upon the commonly received notions of the Pharisees, both of the Messiah, the prophet that Moses said should come, and of their own conduct, and of all religious men: their notion with respect to the Messiah was, that he should be of so quick an understanding, or smell, as in *Isaiah xi. 3.* that he should know at once who was a wicked person, and who not. “Bar Coziba, they say (*l*), reigned two years and a half; he said to the Rabbans, I am the Messiah. They replied to him, It is written of the Messiah, *Isaiah xi. 3.* that he smells, or is of quick understanding and judges; (the gloss on it is, “he smells on a man, and judges and knows, *וְיָשָׁא וְיָשָׁא*” who is a wicked man.”) let us see whether he smells and judges; and when they saw that he did not smell and judge, they killed him.” But Jesus, the true Messiah, could do so; he knew who were sinners; he knew this woman to be one, as the following account shews; and their notion with respect to the conduct of religious persons towards the common people, and those of a bad character, and which the Pharisee here suggests, was, that the touch of such persons was defiling, and therefore to be avoided: for they say (*m*), that “The Pharisees, if they touched the garments of the common people, they were defiled.” And therefore when they walked in the streets, “They walked in the sides (of the ways) that they might not be defiled, *וְיָשָׁא וְיָשָׁא*” “by the touch of the common people (*n*).”

For she is a sinner] A notorious one; or that she is a sinner; and the sense is, Christ, had he been a prophet, the Pharisee intimates, would have known that this woman was a vile creature; and he would have shewn it, by his abhorrence and rejection.

(*l*) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 93. 2.

(*m*) Maimon. in Misn. Chagiga, c. 2. §. 7. (n) Ibid. Hilchot Abot Hamasot, c. 13. §. 4.

rejection of her; or as the Persic version adds, "would have declared her sins."

40 And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

Christ being God omniscient, knew not only the character and conversation of this woman, which were publicly known by all who knew any thing of her, but also the secret thoughts and reasonings of the Pharisee, and makes answer to them; which shows that he was a prophet, in the sense of this man; yea, more than a prophet:

Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee] This could not be Simon Peter Christ spoke to, as some have suggested; for the answer is made unto the Pharisee, and he is the person addressed by the name of Simon; even he, into whose house Christ entered, and now was, as appears from *γ. 44.*

And he saith, Master] Or teacher, or doctor; or as the Syriac version, *Rabbi*; which was the common salutation of doctors:

Say on] This was a way of speaking in use with the Jews, giving leave to proceed in a discourse; and as Christ was now a guest in this man's house, he asks leave of him, and he grants him it: so we read of R. Simeon ben Gamaliel (γ), that he said to R. Ishmael ben Eliah, "Is it thy pleasure that I should say before thee one thing? He said unto him, *אמר* "say on." Again, R. Johanan ben Zaccal said (δ) to a certain governor, "Suffer me to say one thing to thee? He replied "to him, *אמר* say on."

41 There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

All the Oriental versions premise something to this. The Syriac version reads, "Jesus said unto him." The Arabic version, "then he said." The Persic version, "Jesus said;" and the Ethiopic version, "and he said to him;" and something of this kind is understood, and to be supplied in the text:

Which had two debtors, the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty] These were, as the word shows, Roman *denarii*, or pence; the former of these sums, reckoning a Roman penny at sevenpence halfpenny of our money, amounted to fifteen pounds twelve shillings and sixpence; and the latter, to one pound eleven shillings and three pence; the one of these sums was ten times larger than the other. This is a parable: by the creditor God is meant; to whom men owe their beings,

and the preservation of them, and all the mercies of life; and are under obligation to obedience and thankfulness: hence no man can merit any thing of God, or pay off any old debt by a new act of obedience, since all is due to him: by the two debtors are meant, greater and lesser sinners: all sins are debts, and all sinners are debtors; not debtors to sin, for then it would not be criminal, but lawful to commit sin; and God must be pleased with it, which he is not; and men might promise themselves impunity, which they cannot: but they are debtors to fulfil the law, and in case of failure, are bound to the debt of punishment: and of these debtors and debts, some are greater, and others less; not but that they are all equally sinners in Adam, and equally guilty and corrupted by his transgression; and the same seeds of sin are in the hearts of all men, and all sin is committed against God, and is a breach of his law, and is mortal, or deserving of death, even death eternal; but then, as some commands are greater, and others less, so must their transgressions be: sin more immediately committed against God, is greater than that which is committed against our neighbour; and besides, the circumstances of persons and things differ, which more or less aggravate the offence.

42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most?

Neither the lesser nor greater debtor; for though not alike in debt, yet both insolvent; man has run out his whole stock, which the God of nature gave him, in his original creation and primitive state; and is become a bankrupt and a beggar; is poor, wretched, and miserable; he has no money, he has nothing to offer for a composition, much less for payment; he has no righteousness, and if he had, it would be nothing to pay with; since that itself, even in perfection, is due to God, and cannot discharge a former debt: sin being committed against an infinite being, is in some sense an infinite debt, and requires an infinite satisfaction, which a finite creature can never give; and he is therefore liable to a prison, and that for ever: but behold the wonderful grace of God, the creditor!

He frankly forgave them both] Their whole debts, without regard to any merits of theirs, which they could not have, or any motives in them, or any conditions to be performed by them; but purely of his sovereign will, free-grace, and rich mercy, though not without regard to the satisfaction of his Son; which by no means hinders the frankness of the pardon, or obscures the grace of it, but increases and illustrates it; seeing this satisfaction is of God's own finding out, providing, and accepting;

(γ) Abot R. Nathan, c. 38. fol. 9. 2.

(δ) Bemidbar Rabba, 3. 4. fol. 283. 1.

ing; and is at his own expence, and without money and price, to the debtors:

Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most?] Or “ought to love him most,” as the Ethiopic version. The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, leave out the first part of this clause, *tell me*.

43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he* to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

He answered very readily, without any hesitation, not being aware of the application of it to the instance he had been pondering in his mind:

I suppose that he to whom he forgave most] It was his opinion, and to him a plain case, that he that owed the largest debt, and that being forgiven him fully, and freely, as he was under the greatest obligation, so as he ought, he would shew the greatest love and affection to his kind and gracious creditor:

And he said unto him] That is, Jesus said, as the Syriac and Perfic versions express it:

Thou hast rightly judged] This is a right and true judgment of the case; it is according to the nature and truth of things, and what is obvious and clear at first sight, and which every one must agree to.

44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head.

She who stood behind him at his feet,

And said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman?] And what she has done? pointing to her, and comparing him, and her, and their actions together, whereby he might judge of the preceding parable, and how fitly it might be applied to the present case:

I entered into thine house] Not of his own accord, but by the invitation of Simon, and therefore might have expected the usual civilities:

Thou gavest me no water for my feet] To wash them with, no, not so much as water; a civility very common in those hot countries, where walking without stockings, and only with sandals, they needed often washing; and which was very refreshing, and was not only used to travellers and strangers, but to guests, and was usually done by the servants of the house; see the note on v. 38.

But she hath washed my feet with tears] The Perfic version reads, “with the tears of her eyes;” which made a bath for his feet;

And wiped them with the hairs of her head] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Perfic, and Ethiopic versions read only, “with her hair;” which she used instead of a towel; when Simon neither gave him water to wash with, nor a towel to wipe with.

45 Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

A token of civility among friends, when they met together on any occasion. The Jews have a saying (q), “That all kisses are foolish, excepting three; the kiss of grandeur or dignity, as in 1 Sam. x. 1. and the kiss at parting, as in Ruth i. 14. and the kiss at meeting, as in Exod. iv. 27. (of which sort this kiss may be thought to be) to which some add the kiss of consanguinity, or that used by relations to one another) as in Gen. xxix. 11.”

But this woman since the time I came in] The Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, “since she came in;” and so two of Stephens’s copies; which seems to be the more agreeable reading, seeing Christ was in Simon’s house before this woman came; for she knowing that he was there, came thither after him:

Hath not ceased to kiss my feet] Which shews, that this action was repeated by her times without number, even ever since she came into the house.

46 My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

No, not with common oil, so usually done at feasts, see Psalm xxiii. 5.

But this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment] Even “with ointment *ἁρώμα* of spices,” as the Syriac version renders it. There is, throughout the whole account, an opposition between the conduct of Simon and this woman: he gave him no common water to wash his feet with, she shed floods of tears, and with them bathed his feet, and then wiped them clean with the hairs of her head; he gave him not the usual salutation by kissing his head or lips, but she kissed his feet, and that over and over again; he did not so much as anoint his head with common oil, when she anointed his feet with costly ointment brought in an alabaster box. These several ceremonies to guests were used by their hosts in other nations, such as washings, anointing, and kissing (r).

47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which

(q) Shemot Rabba, §. 5. fol. 91. 3, 4.

(r) Vid. Apuleii Metamorph. l. 1. prope finem.

which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same loveth little.*

"Not "for this that she hath done," as the Persian version very wrongly renders it; not because she had washed Christ's feet with her tears, and wiped them with her hair, and kissed and anointed them, therefore her sins were forgiven; nor upon this account, and for those reasons did Christ say, or declare, that they were forgiven; but *εχαρις*, "for this cause," or reason, he said this to Simon the Pharisee, to remove his objections, rectify his mistakes, and stop his murmuring and complaining; by observing, that though she had been a great sinner, yet she was now not such an one as he took her to be; she was a pardoned sinner, and not that guilty and filthy creature he imagined; the guilt of all her sins was removed, and she was cleansed from all her filthiness:

Her sins, which are many, are forgiven] Though she was like the largest debtor in the parable, which owed five hundred pence, yet the whole score was cleared; though her sins were numerous, and attended with very aggravating circumstances, which denominated her a sinner in a very emphatic sense, a notorious one, yet they were all fully and freely forgiven:

For she loved much] Or *therefore she loved much*: her great love was not the cause of the remission of her sins, but the full and free remission of her many sins, which had been manifested to her, was the cause of her great love, and of her shewing it in the manner she had done: that this is the sense of the words, is clear from the parable, and the accommodation of it to the present case, otherwise there would be no agreement. Upon relating the parable of the two debtors, Christ puts the question to Simon, which of the two it was most reasonable to think would love most: his answer is, and which Christ approved of, *he to whom most was forgiven*; where, it is plain, that according to our Lord's sense, and even Simon's opinion of the case, that forgiveness is the cause, and love the effect; and that according as the forgiveness is of more or less, the love is proportionate; and which is applied to the case in hand: this poor woman had been a great sinner; her many sins were pardoned; and therefore she expressed much love to him, from whom she had received her pardon by the above actions, and much more than Simon had done:

But to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little] This is an accommodation of the other part of the parable, and has a very special respect to Simon the Pharisee, whose debts, in his own opinion, were few or none, at least ten times less than this

woman's; and he had little or no sense of the forgiveness of them, or of any obligation to Christ on that account; and therefore was very sparing of his love and respect, and even of common civilities to him.

48 And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

Directing his discourse to the woman that now stood before him:

Thy sins are forgiven] Which was said, partly on account of the Pharisee, to let him see that he knew this woman, what she was, and had been; that she had been a sinner, a great sinner, one that owed five hundred pence, but was now forgiven, washed, cleansed, sanctified, and justified, and therefore not to be shunned and avoided; and partly on the woman's account, that she might have a fresh discovery of the forgiveness of her sins, for her comfort under the severe censure of the Pharisee; and that her faith in it might be strengthened: as also on his own account, to shew that he was not only a prophet that had extraordinary knowledge of persons and their characters, but that he was the most high God, to whom belonged the prerogative of pardoning sin.

49 And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

Other Pharisees that sat at Simon's table with Christ, whom he had invited as guests, on this occasion of seeing and conversing with Jesus; or some of Simon's family, that sat down to eat with him;

Began to say within themselves] That is, either thought and reasoned in their own minds, or whispered among themselves:

Who is this, that forgiveth sins also?] Who, not content openly to transgress the traditions of the elders, by admitting a sinful woman, to touch him, but assumes that to himself which is peculiar to God, to forgive sin: this they said, not as wondering at him, what manner of person he must be, that with such authority pronounced the forgiveness of sin, as Grotius thinks; but rather as offended with him, and filled with indignation against him, and so censuring and reproaching him for wickedness and blasphemy.

50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

Notwithstanding the Pharisee's censure, both of him and her:

Thy faith hath saved thee] Meaning either the object of her faith, himself, who was the author of

of eternal salvation to her; or that she, through faith in him, had received the blessings of salvation, pardon, righteousness, and life from him, and the joys and comfort of it; and had both a right unto, and a meetness for eternal glory and happiness:

Go in peace] Of conscience, and serenity of mind; let nothing disturb thee; not the remembrance of past sins, which are all forgiven, nor the suggestions of Satan, who may, at one time or another, present them to view; nor the troubles and afflictions of this present life, which are all in love; nor the reproaches and censures of men of a pharisaic spirit: go home to thy house, and about thy business, and cheerfully perform thy duty both to God and men; and when thou hast done thy generation-work, thou shalt enter into eternal peace and joy.

C H A P. VIII.

In this chapter we have Christ's travelling through every city, preaching the gospel, his disciples and certain women ministering to him, v. 1—3. The parable of the sower, v. 4—8. which he explains to his disciples, v. 9—15. compareth his doctrine to a candle set in a candlestick, v. 16, 17. sheweth, that to him that hath, more shall be given, and from him that hath not, shall be taken away that which he hath, v. 18. he prefers his obedient disciples before his nearest relations according to the flesh, v. 19—21. Rebuketh the wind, and stilleth the sea by speaking a word, v. 22—25. casteth out a legion of devils from a man possessed by them, v. 26—30. and permiteth them to enter into the swine, v. 31—40. He, going with Jairus to heal his daughter, cureth a woman of a bloody issue, v. 43—48. and raiseth Jairus's daughter from the dead, v. 49—56.

1. **A**ND it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him.

After Christ had healed the centurion's servant at Capernaum, and had raised a widow's son that was dead, to life, at Naim; after John's disciples had been with him, and he had dismissed them, and had said many things in commendation of John, and in vindication both of him and of himself; and after he had taken a meal in a Pharisee's house, where he met with a woman that had been a notorious sinner, who shewed great affection for him, which occasioned much discourse between him and the Pharisee:

That he went throughout every city and village] That is, in Galilee, where he now was, as is clear

from the foregoing chapter, and from what follows in this, see v. 26. and besides, it was by the sea of Galilee that he delivered the following parable concerning the sower; see *Matt. xiii. 1.*

Preaching, and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God] Of the Gospel-dispensation, which was now taking place, and had been long expected; publishing the doctrines and mysteries of it, such as free and full remission of sins for his own sake, justification by his righteousness, acceptance in him the beloved Son of God, and complete salvation by him, as the Saviour of his people; than which nothing could be more welcome news, or better tidings: pointing out the ordinances of that dispensation, and shewing who were the proper subjects of them, and directing and encouraging such to submit unto them; as also signifying what the kingdom of grace lies in; not in meats and drinks, or any outward things, but in inward holiness, peace, and joy: and what is a meetness for entrance into the kingdom of glory, namely, regenerating grace; and what gives a right unto it, even a better righteousness than that of the scribes and Pharisees, and which was no other than his own:

And the twelve were with him] The twelve apostles, whom Christ had chose, and ordained as such: these attended him wherever he went, that they might be witnesses of his miracles, and learn his doctrines; that so they might be thoroughly furnished for their future ministry, both in Judea, and among the Gentiles.

2. And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,

Dispossessed of devils, who had possessed them, and were healed by Christ; see the note on chapter vii. 21.

And infirmities] Various diseases of body: some were dispossessed of devils, and others freed from bodily disorders; of the first sort was

Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils] By the order of Christ, for he cast them out, *Mark xvi. 9.* and which shews, that this is to be understood, in a literal sense, of devils, and the dispossession of them by Christ; and not in a figurative sense, of vices; and the expulsion of them by the power of divine grace; for this same phrase is used where real dispossession is intended: nor need it be thought strange, that seven devils should be in one person, when, in this same chapter, we read of a legion in one man, and which also Christ cast out; see v. 30, 33, 35. This woman seems to be a different person from

her.

her spoken of in the latter part of the preceding chapter; seeing this looks as if it was the first time of her being taken notice of by this Evangelist, and is described by a different character. She is called *Magdalene*, to distinguish her from others of the name of Mary; the reason of which see in the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 56. She is (a) said to be a widow, and so not being bound to an husband, was at leisure to follow Christ.

3 And Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward; and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.

Joanna or *Juchan*, as the Syriac version calls her, was a name, among the Jews, for a woman, as *Jochanan*, or *John*, was for a man. In the Talmud (b) we read of one *Jochani*, or *Joanni*, the daughter of Retibi, the same name with this. Her husband's name was *Chuza*. Dr Lightfoot observes, from a Talmudic treatise (c), such a name in the genealogy of Haman, who is called the son of Chuza; and Haman being an Edomite, and this man being in the family of Herod, who was of that race, suggests it to be an Idumean name. But in my edition of that treatise, Haman is not called the son of *Chuza*, but *בר כוזא* "the son of Ciza;" and besides, *Chuza* is a Jewish name, and the name of a family of note among the Jews: hence we read (d) of R. Broka the *Chuzite*; where the gloss is, "for he was *מבני כוזא* "of the family of *Chuzai*." And (e) elsewhere mention is made of two sons of *Chuzai*; and both the gloss, and *Piske Harosh* upon the place, say, "they were Jews:" so Abimi is said to be of the family of *Chuzai*, or the *Chuzites* (f); and the same is said of R. Acha (g). This man, here mentioned, was *Herod's steward*; a steward of Herod the tetrarch of Galilee. The Arabic version calls him "his treasurer;" and the Vulgate Latin, and the Ethiopic versions, "his procurator;" and some have thought him to be a deputy-governor of the province under him; but he seems rather to be a governor, or "chief of his house," as the Syriac version renders it: he was one that presided in his family, and managed his domestic affairs; was an overseer of them, as Joseph was in Potiphar's house; and the same Greek word that is here used, is adopted by the Jews into their language, and used of Joseph (h): and who moreover say (i), "Let not a man appoint a steward in his house; for if Potiphar had not appointed

Joseph, *אמורו* "a steward, in his house," he "had not come into that matter," of calumny and "reproach." It was common for kings, princes, and great men to have such an officer in their families. We read (k) of a steward of king Agrippa's, who was of this same family. The Persian version is very foreign to the purpose, making *Chuza* to be "of the family of Herod." This man might be either dead, as some have conjectured; or, if living, might be secretly a friend of Christ, and so willing that his wife should follow him; or, if an enemy, such was her zeal for Christ, that she cheerfully exposed herself to all his resentments; and chose rather meanness, contempt, and persecution with Christ, and for his sake, than to enjoy all the pleasures of Herod's court without him.

And *Susanna*] This also was a name for a woman with the Jews, as appears from the history of one of this name with them, which stands among the Apocryphal writings. She, as well as Joanna, and perhaps also Mary Magdalene, were rich, and persons of substance, as well as note, as should seem by what follows:

And many others] That is, many other women; for the words are of the feminine gender:

Which ministered unto him of their substance] Four ancient copies of Beza's, and five of Stephens's, and the Syriac version read, "which ministered unto them;" that is, to Christ, and his disciples, as the Persian version expresses it. This shows the gratitude of these women, who having received favours from Christ, both for their souls and bodies, make returns to him out of their worldly substance, in a way of thankfulness; and also the low estate of Christ, and his disciples, who stood in need of such ministrations; and may be an instruction to the churches of Christ to take care of their ministers, and to communicate in all good things to them, of whose spiritual things they partake; and may be a direction to them to minister to them of what is their own substance, and not another's; and to minister a proper part, and not the whole, as these women ministered to Christ and his apostles, of substance which was their own, and that not all of it, but out of it.

4 ¶ And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable:

Were gathered to Jesus, as he was by the seaside, the sea of Galilee, or Tiberias:

And were come to him out of every city] Of Galilee, to hear him preach, and see his miracles:

He spake by a parable] The following things.

5 A sower

(a) Jerom in *Mar.* xv. 40.

(b) T. Bab. Sota, fol. 22. 1.

(c) *Massechet Sopherim*, c. 13. §. 6.

(d) T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 22. 1.

(e) T. Bab. Nedarim,

fol. 22. 1.

(f) *Juchasin*, fol. 75. 1.

(g) *Ibid.* fol. 78. 1.

(h) Targum Jon. & Jerus. in *Gen.* xxix. 4.

(i) T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 63. 1. & Maimon. *Iffuse Biv*, c. 22. §. 15. & *Maggid Mishn.* in *ibid.*

(k) T. Bab. Succa, fol. 27. 1.

5 A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way-side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.

By a sower Jesus Christ is chiefly designed; tho' it is true of every preacher of the Gospel, who goes forth, being sent by Christ with the precious seed of the word: for the phrase, *his seed*, which only Luke has, best agrees with Christ, he being the proprietor and subject of it. The Alexandrian copy reads, "the seed of himself." The Perfic version reads the whole clause thus, "a sower chose ground, and there he sowed seed;" he fixed on the spot of ground to sow his seed in; as Christ did on the people of the Jews, and afterwards the Gentiles.

And, as he sowed, some fell by the way-side] On the road, which was by the side of the field, in which people commonly walked; and so was beaten hard, and the seed lay upon it, and was not received; which designs such hearers of the word as are not susceptible of it, do not take it in, and have no manner of understanding of it.

And it was trodden down] By every one that passed by; as the Gospel preached to such hardened and ignorant hearers; is despised and trampled under foot by them.

And the fowls of the air devoured it] Who generally flock about places where seed is sowing; and here intend the devil and his angels, that have their dwelling in the air; and frequent places of public worship to hinder the usefulness of the ministry of the word, as much as in them lies.

6 And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.

Which the other Evangelists call *stony places*, and *stony ground*; by which are meant such hearers whose hearts are hardened through the deceitfulness of sin; and continue so, notwithstanding the preaching of the word unto them.

And as soon as it sprung up] As it did immediately, as the other Evangelists say; and that for this reason, which they give, *because it had no depth of earth*, only a small crust, or shell of earth over the rock; and signifies, that these hearers had only a superficial knowledge of the word, and hastily made a profession of it, which soon came to nothing:

It withered away, because it lacked moisture] The other Evangelists say, *when the sun was up, it was scorched*; meaning tribulation and persecution; the grace of God being wanting to support under fiery trials: the reason given in Matthew and Mark

why it withered, is, *because it had no root*; and so read the Perfic and Ethiopic versions here.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up with it, and choked it.

Some fell on ground which had within it the roots of thorns and briars; and design such hearers who have their hearts filled with worldly cares, and sensual lusts and pleasures;

And the thorns sprung up with it] And grew faster than that:

And choked it] As the above things do the word, and make it useless and unprofitable; so that though it took place for a while, and was professed, yet in process of time was neglected and dropped; and, as Mark says, *it yielded no fruit*; at least that came to perfection.

8 And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundred fold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

The Syriac version reads, "on good and beautiful ground;" and for the Cambridge copy of Beza's; ground which both looked well, and proved well; and signifies such hearers who have good and honest hearts, made so by the Spirit of God; who receive the word in the love of it, have a spiritual understanding, and real experience of it.

And sprang up, and bare fruit an hundred fold] Or "an hundred for one," as the Syriac version renders it; an hundred grains for one that was sown. The Ethiopic version adds, "and it was to thirty," and it was to sixty;" that is, as the other Evangelists say, *some thirty, and some sixty fold*; for the word of God is more fruitful in some of those gracious hearers, than in others.

And when he had said these things, he cried] With a loud voice, that what he was about to say might be attended to:

He that hath ears to hear, let him hear] See this parable more largely explained in the notes on Matt. xiii. 3—9.

9 ¶ And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?

That is, as Mark says, *when he was alone*; after the multitude were departed, and they were by themselves, it may be in some house with other disciples:

Saying, What might this parable be?] What is the sense and meaning of it? According to Matthew, they asked, why he spake in parables to the people? and to such a question the following words are a proper answer.

10 And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

Or the doctrines of the Gospel, which to have spiritual knowledge of, is a special and peculiar gift of God. The Vulgate Latin and Persic versions read, *the mystery*, in the singular, as in Mark:

But to others in parables] That is, the doctrines of the Gospel are delivered in a parabolical way to others; to such as are *without*, as the Evangelist Mark expresses it, who are strangers and foreigners; and not children, who are not the favourites of heaven, and the disciples of Christ:

That seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand] What was delivered to them; see the notes on *Matt. xiii. 11, 13, 14.*

11 ¶ Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

Or, "this is the sense of the parable," as the Arabic version renders it:

The seed is the word of God] The Gospel, as preached by Christ, his apostles, and faithful ministers; which has God for its author, is concerning the grace of God; and is what he blesses, and makes effectual to answer any good purpose.

12 Those by the way-side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

They hear the word of God, though only by accident, and very carelessly, and without understanding what they hear:

Then cometh the devil] Signified by the fowls of the air:

And taketh away the word out of their hearts] Or memories; that little of it, which is retained there, and diverts their minds from it by other objects; so that they quite forget what they have heard;

Lest they should believe, and be saved] This clause is only in Luke; and with it may be compared *2 Cor. iv. 4.* for with true faith in Christ, the sum and substance of the word, *salvation* is connected; and Satan being an enemy to the salvation of souls, does all he can to hinder their faith in him.

13 They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

The seed that fell upon the rock, or stony ground, signify such sort of hearers,

Who receive the word with joy] The Ethiopic version reads, "with joy of heart." But this sort of hearers receive not the word into their hearts, or with their hearts believe it, and from their hearts obey it; but into their heads, and have only an historical faith of it; nor with hearty, spiritual, solid joy, or joy in the Holy Ghost: for their hearts remain like a rock, unbroken by the word; but with a flash of natural affection, which quickly goes off.

And these have no root] Neither in themselves, as the other Evangelists say, they have no true grace in them; nor have they any root in Christ, nor in the love of God:

Which for a while believe] Their faith is a temporary one, like that of Simon Magus; which shews it is not true faith; for that is an abiding grace; Christ, who is the author, is the finisher of it, and prays for it, that it fail not. The Persic version renders it, "in the time of hearing they have faith;" and such sort of hearers there are, who, whilst they are hearing, assent to what they hear; but when they are gone, either forget it, or, falling into bad company, are prevailed upon to doubt of it, and disbelieve it. The Arabic version renders it, "they believe for a small time;" their faith doth not continue long, nor their profession of it, both are soon dropped:

And in the time of temptation fall away] Or *go back*, as the Vulgate Latin version, they draw back unto perdition; or "forsake that," as the Arabic version reads, the word, they have heard and received, their faith in it, and profession of it; "and soon become apostates," as the Persic version renders it. By the time of temptation, is not meant any particular and sore temptation of Satan, but a time of affliction and persecution, as appears from the other Evangelists; which is a trying time to professors of religion, and when those who have not the root of the matter in them, fall away.

14 And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

The seed that fell among thorns, or were sown on thorny ground, represent such hearers:

Which, when they have heard, go forth] From hearing the word, to their worldly business; or go on in the pursuit of their worldly lusts and pleasures, notwithstanding; for the word translated, *go forth*, belongs to the next clause;

And

And are choked with cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life] And with it to be read thus, and going on in, or under, that is, under the power and influence of, the cares, and riches, and pleasures of life, they are choked; to which agrees the Arabic version, which renders it, "in which they walk, or which they follow." The Vulgate Latin version is, "and from the cares, and riches, and pleasures of life, going, they are choked;" but it is not going from them, but going on in them, which chokes them, or suffocates the word they have heard, whereby it becomes of no effect; unless it should be rendered, by the cares, &c. they are choked,

And bring no fruit to perfection] For what fruit such hearers do bring forth, in a way of profession, soon drops off, and perishes.

15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

The seed that fell on good ground, design such hearers,

Which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it] Who hear with an honest and good intention, and faithfully keep it, and hold it fast:

And bring forth fruit with patience] With great constancy, suffering much for the sake of it; and the more they suffer, the more fruitful they are. See this explanation of the parable more largely insisted on in the notes on Matt. xiii. 19—23.

16 ¶ No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putting it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.

Christ by this, and some proverbial sentences following, observes to his disciples, that though the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven were delivered in parables for the present, that they might not be seen and understood by some; and though he gave to them the explanation of such parables, as of the above, in a private manner; yet his intention was not, that these things should always remain a secret with them; but, as they were the lights of the world, they should communicate them to others; and that that light of the Gospel, and the knowledge of the doctrines of it, which he had imparted to them, were not to be retained and concealed in their bosoms, but to be diffused and spread among others: even as no man, when he lights a candle,

Covereth it with a vessel] Any sort of vessel, as with a bushel, Matt. v. 15. see the note there; or

with a bucket, or "with a shell," as the Perfic version here interprets, rather than translates:

Or putteth it under a bed] Whether a bed to sleep on, or a couch to sit or lie upon at meals:

But setteth it on a candlestick] A vessel, or instrument made for that use and purpose, to put and hold a candle in:

That they which enter in] To the house, or room, where it is,

May see the light] Of it, and be enlightened by it: even so it is the will of Christ, that what evangelical light and knowledge he bestows on any persons, they should not hide it, nor their gifts and talents, or keep it back from the view of others, but should hold it forth both in their preaching, and in their practice.

17 For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad.

Meaning, whatever was then wrapped up in parables and dark sayings, or was secretly and in a private manner committed to them, should be made manifest by them to others hereafter:

Neither any thing hid, that shall not be made known, and come abroad] For what had been whispered to them, in the most secret and silent manner, was to come abroad, not only in Judea, but in all the world, and to be published upon the house-tops; see the notes on Matt. x. 26, 27.

18 Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.

That ye hear not in a careless and negligent manner, since what truths and doctrines ye now hear with the ear, are to be preached by you unto others:

For whosoever hath] That is, hath knowledge of the doctrines of the Gospel, and hath gifts and abilities to preach them to others:

To him shall be given] More knowledge, and by using his gifts they shall be increased:

But he that hath not] True, solid, spiritual knowledge of divine things, though he has had considerable advantages and opportunities of learning it, as the apostles especially had:

From him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have] Or, "that which he thinks he has," as the Syriac version renders it; "that which he seemed to others to have, or thought himself he had;" the knowledge he had of truth, and which was rather a shew of knowledge than real, shall be taken from him; his seeming gifts and parts shall

die, and vanish away, and he shall be left to fall into ignorance, error, and heresy. Observe, that this is to be understood not of internal grace, and experimental knowledge, but of speculative notions of the Gospel, and of external gifts; and so furnishes out no argument against the final perseverance of real saints; see the notes on *Matthew* xiii. 12. and chapter xxv. 29.

19 ¶ Then came to him *his* mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press.

It was when Christ was preaching in a house at Capernaum, that Mary his mother, and some of his near kinsmen with her, came from Nazareth to him: these brethren of his were relations according to the flesh, either by Joseph, or his mother's side: who they were, cannot be said with certainty; it may be they were Josias and Simon; for as for James and Judas, they were among the twelve apostles, and with him; and these are the four only persons that are mentioned by name, as his brethren, *Matt.* xiii. 55. though there were others that were so called, who did not believe in him, *John* vii. 5.

And could not come at him for the press] The multitude of people that were about him, who were so thick, that there was no coming near him, much less was there an opportunity of speaking privately with him. The Syriac version renders it, "they could not speak unto him for the multitude."

20 And it was told him *by certain* which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee.

The phrase, *which said*, is omitted in the Vulgate Latin version, and in Beza's most ancient copy. The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions only read, "and they said unto him;" and the Perfic version renders it, "a certain person said;" some one person, as in *Matt.* xii. 47.

Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee] And to speak with thee, as in *Matt.* xii. 47. see the note there.

21 And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

He said, not to his mother and brethren, but to those that told him of them; who either designed to reproach him with them, by reason of the meanness of them, or to interrupt him in his work:

My mother and my brethren are these] Pointing to his disciples:

Which hear the word of God] Which he had been preaching, and was meant by the *seed* in the preceding parable:

And do it] Behave in their lives and conversations agreeable to it; and observe the precepts and ordinances in it, elsewhere called the will of God his Father; see the notes on *Matt.* xii. 49, 50.

22 ¶ Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.

The same day at even, as Mark says, chapter iv. 35. in which he delivered the parables of the sower, and of the seed cast into the ground, and of the grain of mustard-seed:

That he went into a ship with his disciples] They following him into it, as in *Matt.* viii. 23.

And he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake] Of Genesareth, or the sea of Galilee:

And they launched forth] Into the sea; they set sail, and proceeded: this clause is omitted in the Syriac and Perfic versions.

23 But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled *with water*, and were in jeopardy.

He fell asleep on a pillow, in the hinder part of the ship, as in *Mark* iv. 38.

And there came down a storm of wind on the lake] See the note on *Matt.* viii. 24.

And they were filled with water] Not the disciples, but the ship in which they were, and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "their ship was filled with water." The Syriac and Perfic versions render it, "the ship was almost sunk," or immersed:

And were in jeopardy] Of their lives, in the utmost danger, just ready to go to the bottom. This clause is left out in the Syriac and Perfic versions.

24 And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.

That is, the disciples came from some part of the ship, to the hinder part of it, where Christ was asleep; and by their shrieks and cries, and repeated vociferations, awaked him out of sleep:

Saying, Master, master, we perish] The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, only read *master*, without a repetition of the word, as in *Matthew* and *Mark*; but the Syriac and Perfic

fic versions repeat it, and render the words, "our master, our master;" see the note on *Matt. viii. 25*.

Then he arose, and rebuked the wind, and the raging of the water, and they ceased, and there was a calm] See the note on *Matt. viii. 26*.

25 And he said unto them, Where is your faith? and they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

That is, he said to his disciples, who had professed faith in him, but now discovered very little:

And they being afraid, wondered] Being filled with an awful sense of his majesty, were amazed at his power and authority, in rebuking the wind and sea, which at once obeyed him; and were still:

Saying one to another] Among themselves, privately:

What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water] Or *the sea*, as the Vulgate Latin. The Syriac version reads both, "the floods and the sea."

And they obey him] According to Matthew, these words seem to be spoken by the men of the ship, the mariners; but here, according to Luke, they seem to be the words of the disciples; see the notes on *Matt. viii. 27*, and *Mark iv. 41*.

26 ¶ And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee.

In *Matt. viii. 28*, it is called *the country of the Gergesenes*; see the note there, as it is here, in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions; and "of the Gerasenes," in the Vulgate Latin; but the Syriac and Persic versions read, "of the Gadarenes," as in *Mark v. 1*. see the note there:

Which is over against Galilee] From whence the ship lanchcd, and Christ and his disciples came.

27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs.

The Persic and Ethiopic versions read, "when they went forth to land;" when Christ and his disciples came out of the ship, and went ashore:

There met him out of the city a certain man] Or rather, there met him a certain man of the city; that is, one that belonged to, and was an inhabitant of Gadara, or some city thereabout; who had been born and brought up, and had lived there; for certain it is, that he did not now come out of the city, but out of the tombs, as in *Matt. viii. 28*.

Mark v. 2. and to which agrees the account of him that follows here: in the Vulgate Latin version, these words, *out of the city*, are omitted; which the interpreter not understanding, might leave out, as carrying in it a seeming contradiction to the accounts of him:

Which had devils long time] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Arabic versions, read in the singular number, "which had a devil;" and which agrees with *v. 29*. for though more are after mentioned, yet the many might be under one head, and chief of them; but in all the copies it is read in the plural number, *devils*; and to this agrees the name of *legion*, for there were many devils in him, and they had possession of him a long time, which aggravates the miserable condition of this man, and illustrates the power of Christ in freeing him from them:

And wore no clothes] But went naked, and when any were put upon him, would tear them to pieces:

Neither abode in any house, but in the tombs] See the note on *Mark v. 3*.

28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not.

Saw him afar off, at some considerable distance; he ran towards him, *Mark v. 6*.

He cried out, and fell down before him] That is, the man possessed with the devil did so, under his impulse, and through his agitation of him:

And with a loud voice said] Which was the unclean spirit in the man:

What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee torment me not] That is, before the time; see the note on *Matt. viii. 29*.

29 (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.)

The Spirit that had the rest of the devils under his authority and power,

To come out of the man] This he had done, either before, or just as he came up to him; see the note on *Mark v. 8*.

For oftentimes it had caught him] Possessed him, and wrought so strongly in him, and with so much fury, that there was no governing him:

And

And he was kept bound with chains and fetters] Attempts were made to bind him, and keep him bound, but in vain :

And he brake the bands] See Mark v. 4.

And was driven of the devil into the wilderness] Into some desert and desolate place, where were the tombs and sepulchres of the dead ; this was done by the pounce of the legion.

30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name ? And he said, Legion : because many devils were entered into him.

This question was put, not out of ignorance in Christ, but for the sake of those that were with him ; and partly, that the miserable condition of this man might be the more known ; and partly, that his own power might be the more manifest in the dispossession :

And he said, Legion : because many devils were entered into him] See the note on Mark v. 9.

31 And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep.

That is, all the devils, the whole legion of them, intreated Jesus, under whose power, and at whose dispose they were :

That he would not command them to go out into the deep] Meaning, not the deep waters of the sea, for thither they ran the swine at their own request ; but the bottomless pit of hell, where others of these spirits lay in chains of darkness ; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, *into hell* : they desired, that when they went out of this man they might not be ordered thither, or remanded to their former prison ; for they knew that if he gave the word of command, they must obey ; but that they might be suffered to continue in that country, and range about on earth, or be any where rather than in hell.

32 And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain : and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them.

About two thousand, Mark v. 13.

Feeding on the mountain] See the note on Mark v. 11.

And they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them] Which they could not do without his leave :

And he suffered them] See the notes on Mark v. 12, 13.

33 Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine : and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.

They went out, being obliged by the power of Christ, fore against their wills, having had possession of him a long time :

And entered into the swine] Possessed them :

And the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake] That is, of Gennesareth ; or the sea, as the Syriac and Persic versions read ; that is, the sea of Galilee, the same with the former :

And were choked] In the waters, and died, as the Ethiopic version adds.

34 When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country.

That the devils went out of the man possessed by them, and entered into the herd of swine, which becoming mad therewith, ran furiously down the precipice into the sea, and were drowned :

They fled] As persons affrighted at these uncommon and surprising events, and as afraid to see their owners :

And went and told it in the city] That is, of Gadara, or some other city near at hand ; the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, " in the cities ;" in all the cities round about in that country :

And in the country] Or fields, in the villages adjacent, and in the houses which were scattered about in the fields for conveniency, for rural business.

35 Then they went out to see what was done ; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind : and they were afraid.

That is, the inhabitants of the city, or cities and villages, and houses in the fields ; these went out from their respective places of abode, to see with their own eyes, what the swineherds had related to them concerning the man that had been possessed with devils, and what was become of the swine :

And came to Jesus] Where he was, which was not far from the sea-shore :

And found the man out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus] Quiet and serene, in an humble posture, and as a disciple of Christ, receiving instructions from him :

Clothed, and in his right mind : and they were afraid] See the note on Mark v. 15.

36 They also which saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed.

The disciples of Christ, or the men of the ship, or persons who lived hard by in the fields, who were eye-witnesses of these several things :

Told

Told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed] See the note on *Mark* v. 16.

37 Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again.

For it seems a very large number of people were presently gathered together, from all parts of the country, upon the resort of the swineherds, who fled, it is very likely, some one way, and some another:

Of the country of the Gadarenes round about] Of the country that was round about Gadara. The Vulgate Latin reads, "of the Gerasenes;" and the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, "of the Geresenes:" and they all with one accord,

Besought him to depart from them, for they were taken with great fear] Left they should suffer other and greater losses, than the loss of the swine; choosing rather that the devils should be retained among them, than Christ continue with them:

And he went up into the ship] Directly, granted their request at once; not desirous of staying with such an ungrateful people, that loved their swine more than him; yea, than the bodily health and welfare of their countrymen:

And he returned back again] To Galilee, at least in a very little time, after some short discourse with the dispossessed man; having staid but a very small time in that place, just landed as it were, and not having proceeded far from the sea-shore.

38 Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying,

He being sensible of the power of Christ, and of the favour he had received from him, was of a quite different mind from his countrymen: and

Besought him that he might be with him] See the note on *Mark* v. 18.

But Jesus sent him away] From him into the country:

Saying] As follows,

39 Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.

His house very likely was in the city of Gadara, whither he went, and throughout the whole of which, he published the account of the dispossession of the devils from him: Mark adds, *to thy*

friends; relations, acquaintance, and countrymen:

And shew how great things God hath done unto thee] For none but God could effect such things; tacitly suggesting to him hereby, that he himself was God. Mark adds, *and hath had compassion on thee*; signifying, that what he had done for him, did not arise from merit in the man, but from mercy in himself; see the note on *Mark* v. 19.

And he went his way] He obeyed the orders of Christ, as love and gratitude obliged him:

And published throughout the whole city] Of Gadara, and not only there, but in the rest of the ten cities, called *Decapolis*, *Mark* v. 20. one of which, was this of Gadara, as Pliny relates (*k*):

How great things Jesus had done unto him] Having cast out a legion of devils from him, clothed him, and brought him to his right mind; and had not only delivered his body from a diabolical possession, but had given him spiritual and saving instructions for his soul, on which he wrought a real work of grace.

40 And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received him: for they were all waiting for him.

Was returned from the country of the Gadarenes, to the other side of the sea of Tiberias, to Galilee; and particularly to his own city, Capernaum; see *Matt.* ix. 1.

The people gladly received him] Who were of a different cast from those he had just left; being sensible of the benefits they received from him, both by his ministry and miracles; and which was the reason of their receiving him with so much joy and gladness:

For they were all waiting for him] On the shore, looking out very eagerly for him, being earnestly desirous of his speedy return to them; having many that wanted his assistance, both for their souls and bodies, of which the following are instances.

41 ¶ And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house:

See the note on *Matt.* v. 22.

And he was a ruler of the synagogue] At Capernaum; and it was the more remarkable, that such an one should come to Christ, and express any regard to his person, or faith in his power, and therefore a *behold* is prefixed to this account; see the note on *Matt.* ix. 18.

And

And he fell down at Jesus' feet] Shewing great reverence and humility; and, as Matthew says, *worshipped him*; if not in a religious, yet in a civil way:

And besought him that he would come into his house] Which was at some distance from thence, as appears by what follows.

42 For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him.

One, and so exceedingly dear to him:

About twelve years of age] See the note *Matt. ix. 18.*

And she lay a dying] Or, "was near death," as the Syriac and Persic versions; or, "was just ready to die," as the Ethiopic version. The Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions render it, "she was dead, or now dead;" and which agrees with *Matt. ix. 18.* see the note there:

But as he went] Along the streets of Capernaum, from Matthew's house, where he had been entertained with his disciples and others, and where he had a conversation with some of the Pharisees and John's disciples, to the ruler's house:

The people thronged him] Such a vast multitude followed him to see the cure, that he was even crowded, and so pressed on all sides that it was difficult to walk along.

43 ¶ And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any,

The Persic version reads, "there was a woman in that city," &c. in the city of Capernaum; see the note on *Matt. ix. 20.*

Which had spent all her living upon physicians] She had applied to one physician after another, and had consumed all her substance in this way:

Neither could be healed of any] Though she had followed the directions and prescriptions of many, who pretended they were able to cure her; see the note on *Mark v. 26.*

44 Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanch'd.

Came in the press and crowd of people, being ashamed to come before him and tell him her case:

And touched the border of his garment] The fringe the Jews were obliged to wear at the bottom of their garments, *Numb. xv. 38. Deut. xxii. 12.* and which the more religious sort did; for by this they were distinguished from the common people. It is asked (1), "Who is a plebeian, or one of the

"common people? The wise men say, Who ever does not put on the *Tephillin* (the frontlets, *Deut. vi. 8.*) Ben Azzai says, Whoever has not, *וְיָרִיף* "the fringe on his garment;" see the note on *Matt. ix. 20.* This woman was persuaded in her own mind, if she could but touch the clothes of Christ she should be healed; and accordingly she was:

And immediately her issue of blood stanch'd] Stopped, and was dried up; see *Mark v. 28, 29.*

45 And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

This Jesus said, not as ignorant of the person that had done it, but in order to discover her to the people, and the cure she had received, as well as her faith; see the note on *Mark v. 30.*

When all denied] Both the disciples and the multitude, as many as were near him, and who might be thought to have done it; all excepting the woman, who afterwards came and declared it; for it is very likely, that as soon as she had touched his garment, and got her cure, she drew farther off.

Peter, and they that were with him] The rest of the disciples, who were in company together, as appears from *Mark v. 31.*

Said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?] Or, "my garment;" as the Ethiopic version reads; see the note on *Mark v. 31.*

46 And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.

Not in a common and accidental way, but with design, and in the strength of faith:

For I perceive that virtue is gone out of me] For the cure of the person that had touched him, and that not without his knowledge and will; see chapter vi. 19.

47 And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.

Was not hid from Christ, among the crowd, nor the thing that she had done. The Syriac and Arabic versions render it, "that he had not forgot her;" she hoping he would be diverted from taking any notice of her and her action, through the crowd of people about him:

She

(1) T. Bab. Succa, foli 22, 1.

She came trembling] For fear of the anger and resentment of Christ, and lest the favour should be revoked, and the penalty of the law inflicted; see the note on *Mark v. 33*.

And falling down before him] In the most humble manner, "at his feet," as the Arabic version reads; "and worshipped him," as the Syriac, Persian, and Ethiopic versions have it; gave him the glory of the cure, and thanks for it:

She declared unto him before all the people] The whole truth of the matter, what a disease she had laboured under for so long a time, and what means she had used to no purpose:

For what cause she had touched him] Namely, in order to have a cure, which she believed she should have in that way:

And how she was healed immediately] As soon as ever she had touched him.

48 And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.

Instead of frowning upon her, and chiding her for what she had done, he addressed her in a very affable and affectionate manner; bidding her,

Be of good comfort] And not be afraid; this clause is left out in the Vulgate Latin version, as in *Mark v. 34*. but is in the copies, and other versions:

Thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace] See the notes on *Matt. viii. 2. Mark v. 34. Luke vii. 50*.

49 ¶ While he yet spake there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master.

Spake the above words to the woman;

There cometh one] Mark suggests, there were more than one, chapter v. 35. see the note there; and the Persian version here reads, "some of the ruler's family came;" that is, to him, who was now with Jesus:

From the ruler of the synagogue's house] So the word *house*, is supplied by the Syriac and Ethiopic versions; otherwise the words would be, *from the ruler of the synagogue*; which could not be, since he was still with Christ: hence some versions, as the Vulgate and Arabic, render them, "to the ruler of the synagogue;" and which gave a true sense, and a right view of the case; for this messenger, both came from his house, and to him:

Saying to him, Thy daughter is dead, trouble not the Master] To bring him any further, since all hope of help was now gone. The Vulgate Latin

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version, instead of *master*, reads *him*; and the Ethiopic version, *Jesus*.

50 But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole.

Heard the message that was brought to the ruler, and the hint that was given, that it was needless to give him any farther trouble:

He answered him] Not the messenger, but "the father of the child," as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persian, and Ethiopic versions read:

Saying, Fear not] Do not be dismayed at this message, nor despair of help, notwithstanding such is the case:

Believe only, and she shall be made whole] Exercise faith in me, that I am able to raise her from the dead, and I will do it; and she shall be restored to life, and to perfect health and strength again.

51 And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden.

The house of the ruler of the synagogue;

He suffered no man to go in] To the room where the dead body lay:

Save Peter, James, and John] Not one of the multitude that followed him, nor any of the disciples, but these three; who were his favourite ones, and were a sufficient number to be witnesses of the miracle:

And the father and the mother of the maiden] These also were admitted. The Persian version very wrongly joins these last words with the beginning of the next verse, reading them thus, "the father and mother of the maiden, with the domestics, wept and bewailed her."

52 And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth.

Not only her relations and friends, and the servants of the house, but the mourning women, that were hired on this occasion, and employed for this purpose:

But he said, Weep not] Neither in shew, as the mourning women did, nor in reality, as the friends of the deceased:

She is not dead, but sleepeth] See the notes on *Matt. ix. 24. Mark v. 39*.

53 And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead.

Q

The servants, neighbours, and relations, the pipers and mourning women; these, from weeping for the dead, fell to laughing at Christ, having him and his words in the utmost derision:

Knowing that she was dead] Some of them having been employed in laying her out, and all of them having seen her, and were satisfied, and thoroughly assured, that she was actually dead, as ever any person was, as she doubtless was; but they were ignorant in what sense Christ meant she was not dead, but asleep; see the notes as before.

54 And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise.

Out of the room, where the maiden lay, all the mourners and pipers; all excepting the parents of the child, and his three disciples. This clause is left out in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; nor was it in two of Beza's ancient copies, and in two of Stephens's; but in the rest, and in the other versions:

And took her by the hand, and called, saying] In the Syriac language, *Talitha cumi*, as in *Mark v. 41*.

Maid, arise] See the note there.

55 And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat.

Her soul, which was departed from her, upon the all-powerful voice of Christ, returned to her body; and re-entered, as the Ethiopic version adds: this shews that the soul is immortal, and dies not with the body; that it exists in a separate state from it after death, and will hereafter re-enter the body, and be again united to it in the resurrection; of which this instance was a kind of pledge and emblem: where her spirit was during this time of separation, is needless, and would be curious and rash to inquire; it is enough to say, with the scripture, that it had returned to God that gave it, *Eccl. xii. 7.* and by whom it was sent back to its body again:

And she arose straightway] From off the bed; and, as Mark says, *walked*; for she was at an age capable of it, and which actions of arising and walking, clearly proved that she was alive and in health:

And he commanded to give her meat] Which was done, partly to shew, not only that she was alive, but that her disorder was removed, and her appetite restored, and that she could eat and drink, as she had done before her illness; and partly to observe that she was raised, not to an immortal life, as none were before Christ; but to an animal life, which was to be supported by eating and drinking, and so a mortal one; see the note on *Mark v. 43*.

56 And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.

Astonished at the miracle that was wrought, to see their child restored to life; to see her arise, walk, and eat, being in perfect health and strength, and no disorder attending her;

But he charged them that they should tell no man what was done] The Ethiopic version reads, "what he had done, nor any thing that was done;" not that the thing itself could be concealed, but the way and manner in which, and the means by which it was done, and the circumstances of it; how that by taking her by the hand, and commanding her to arise, she forthwith arose, and walked and eat: Christ's meaning is, that he would not have them take any pains to publish this affair, or to make it more known than was necessary: not to acquaint every person with the particulars of it, but keep them as private as they could: his reasons for this, see in the note on *Mark v. 43*.

CHAP. IX.

This chapter relates Christ's commission to his twelve apostles to go out and preach the Gospel, giving them power over evil spirits, and to heal the sick, *§. 1—6.* Herod's terror at the growing greatness of our Lord Jesus; who desireth to see Christ, *§. 7—9.* The apostles return with joy, *§. 10.* Christ feedeth five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes, *§. 11—17.* Divers opinions of the people concerning Christ, *§. 18—21.* His transfiguration before three of his disciples, *§. 22—26.* He cureth a lunatic child, *§. 27—36.* Rebukes the ambition of his disciples, and tells them who should be the greatest among them, *§. 37—45.* Deborteth them from forbidding any to cast out devils in his name, *§. 46—48.* Journeying to Jerusalem he is refused by the Samaritans, and reproveth his disciples for their desire of revenge, *§. 49—56.* His answer to several that were inclined to follow him, but not heartily, *§. 57—62.*

1 **T**HEN he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.

The Perfic version reads, "all his twelve disciples;" the other nine, besides the three that were with him when he raised Jairus's daughter, recorded in the foregoing chapter; the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, "the twelve apostles," for so Christ had named his disciples; see chapter vi. 13. The Syriac version only reads, "his own twelve;" and this is agreeable to Luke's way of speaking; see chapter viii. 1. and ix. 12.

And

And gave them power and authority over all devils] That is, all kinds of devils, particularly to cast them out of the bodies of men possessed by them:

And to cure diseases] Of all sorts.

2 And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

To preach the Gospel which gives an account of the kingdom of the Messiah; of his kingly office and power; of his church, which is his kingdom, and of the government of it, by the ministration of the word, and the administration of ordinances; of the kingdom of grace in the hearts of Christ's subjects, and the nature of it; and of the kingdom of glory, and what is the saints meetness for it, and right unto it.

And to heal the sick] Of every disease of body, and thereby confirm their mission and commission from Christ, to preach the Gospel, and recommend it to men.

3 And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.

Throughout the towns and cities of Judea, where they were sent to preach the Gospel:

Neither staves] The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read in the singular number, neither staff, rod, or club; and so it was in one of Beza's ancient copies; but in all the rest in the plural, as in Matthew; which last must be the true reading, since one staff was allowed, according as in Mark vi. 8. though more than one were forbidden:

Nor scrip] Or bag to put provision in; see the note on Matt. x. 10.

Neither bread, neither money] Gold, silver, or brass, to buy bread with; because they were to have it, wherever they came, given them, as their due, and the reward of their labour:

Neither have two coats apiece] The word *apiece*, is left out in one copy, nor is it expressed in the Vulgate Latin, and in the Eastern versions, which read as in Matt. x. 10. though the word does aptly and clearly express the sense of the prohibition, which was not that they should not have two coats among them, but not two apiece; or each man should not have two, or have change of raiment; see the note on Matt. x. 10.

4 And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart.

In any town, or city, they should come to in their journey through Judea, and should enter into for the sake of lodging, during their stay:

There abide] Do not shift quarters, or move from house to house:

And thence depart] The house you come into first, go out of last, when ye leave the town or city. The Vulgate Latin and Perfic versions read; "and thence do not depart;" and so Beza says it is read in a certain copy, but then the sense is the same, as the Ethiopic version renders it, "do not go out from thence, until ye depart;" that is, do not leave the house, till you depart out of the town or city; agreeable to which is the Arabic version, "remain in it until the time of your going out;" see the note on Matt. x. 11.

5 And whosoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them.

Receive you into their houses:

When ye go out of that city] Where lodging and entertainment are refused you;

Shake off the very dust from your feet, for a testimony against them] See the notes on Matt. x. 14. and Mark vi. 11.

6 And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the Gospel, and healing every where.

That is, the apostles departed, as the Syriac and Perfic versions express it: they went from Christ, and the place where he was, from Capernaum; at least from some place in Galilee:

And went through the towns] The Syriac, Perfic, and Ethiopic versions add, "and cities;" that is, of Judea, as well as Galilee, even the whole land of Israel:

Preaching the Gospel] Which explains what is meant by the kingdom of God, §. 2.

And healing every where] All sorts of bodily diseases, wherever they came.

7 ¶ Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead:

Tetrarch of Galilee, and who is called a king in Mark vi. 14. as he is here in the Ethiopic version:

Heard of all that was done by him] Of all the miracles that were wrought by Christ and his apostles; the same of which were the more spread through the mission of the apostles, and the journey they took through all the towns and cities of Galilee, which were in Herod's jurisdiction; by which means he, and his court, came to the knowledge of them, the whole country ringing with the account of the same:

And he was perplexed.] Anxious, and distressed, not knowing well what to think of Christ, and the different sentiments of men about him: he was afraid lest he should be *John the Baptist risen from the dead*, whom he had beheaded: he hesitated about it at first, though he afterwards was fully persuaded, in his own mind, that it was he, as some affirmed; and this gave him great uneasiness, and filled him with distress and horror:

Because that it was said of some that John was risen from the dead.] And he began to fear it was true, though willing to disbelieve it, at least to make a question of it, especially in public; though in private, to his own family and servants, he was free to tell his mind.

8 And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.

Elias, who had been translated, body and soul, to heaven, and whom the Jews expected a little before the coming of the Messiah:

And of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.] That is, one of the former prophets. It is well known, that the Jews distinguish the prophets into the former and the latter; the books of the prophets of the Old Testament are so distinguished; the writings of the former prophets are those of *Joshua*, *Judges*, first and second of *Samuel*, and the first and second of *Kings*: the latter prophets are, *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah*, *Ezekiel*, which are the greater prophets, and the twelve lesser ones: and in the Talmud (a) it is asked, "Who are *הנביאים הראשונים* 'the former prophets'?" Says R. Huna, "They are *David*, *Samuel*, and *Solomon*—and why are they called former prophets? to except (or distinguish) them from *Haggai*, *Zachariah*, and *Malachi*, who are the latter." So that by one of the old prophets, may be meant one of those that were before the times of Elias, as Samuel or David.

9 And Herod said, John have I beheaded: but who is this of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see him.

That is, he had ordered John to be beheaded, and which was accordingly done by the executioner; of which he had full proof, since the head was brought him in a charger, and which he delivered to the daughter of Herodias:

But who is this of whom I hear such things?] Such wonderful things, such amazing miracles, as were done by Christ: he seems to have reasoned after this manner with himself, "Surely this cannot be John, for I have beheaded him! And yet who should it be?" And whereas some affirmed, that it

was John that was risen from the dead, he began to fear that it was he:

And he desired to see him.] That he might be satisfied whether it was he or no; for he had he had had personal knowledge of John, and converse with him; and therefore, upon sight of him, could tell whether it was he that was risen from the dead, or no; but we do not find Herod had a sight of Christ, until he was sent by Pilate to him at Jerusalem; see *Luke* xxiii. 7, 8.

10 ¶ And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place, belonging to the city, called Bethsaida.

Returned from the several parts of the land where they had been sent, and had been preaching and working miracles, having gone through their circuit, and finished the service they were sent to do:

Told him all they had done.] What doctrines they had taught, how they had been received, and what success they met with; what miracles they had wrought, how they had dispossessed devils, and healed all sorts of diseases:

And he took them and went aside privately.] By ship, over some part of the sea of Galilee; see *Mark* vi. 32.

Into a desert place belonging to the city, called Bethsaida.] The city of Andrew and Peter, *John* i. 44. and which, as Josephus (b) says, was by the lake of Gennesareth, and by Philip called *Julias*; and this desert place was the desert of Bethsaida; a lonely, wild, uncultivated, and desolate place, not far from it. Hither Christ went with his disciples, that they might be retired and alone, and have some refreshment and rest from their labours, and where they might privately converse together; and he gave them some fresh instructions, directions, and comfort.

11 And the people, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.

The people having heard of his departure from others, and seeing him go off themselves:

Followed him.] Not by ship, but on foot, going over the bridge at Chammath, of Gadara, and got thither before Christ and his disciples did:

And he received them.] Very kindly, and in a very affectionate manner, and with great respect, though they had prevented the private interview between him and his apostles:

And

(a) T. Bab. Sota, 48. 2.

(b) Antiqu. l. 18. c. 3.

And he spake unto them of the kingdom of God.] Of the Gospel-dispensation, now setting up, and of the doctrines and ordinances of it, of the governing principle of grace in the hearts of his people, and of the glory of the world to come:

And healed them that had need of healing.] For their bodies; as well as preached the doctrines of grace for the good of their souls; he both taught doctrine and wrought miracles.

12 ¶ *And when the day began to wear away,* then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place.

Or, "began to decline," as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions; or, "to incline," as the Syriac; that is, as the Ethiopic version renders it, "when the sun was declining towards the horizon," and was almost set; or, "when the evening-time was come," as the Perfic version:

Then came the twelve.] That is, "the disciples," as the Perfic version; or, "his disciples," as the Syriac:

And said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about.] The place where they were, round about the city of Bethsaida, the several adjacent houses in the fields, villages, towns, and cities:

And lodge, and get victuals.] Where they might have lodging for that night, it being too far for them to reach their habitations that evening; and also that they might provide themselves with proper and sufficient food, which was not to be had in the place where they were:

For we are here in a desert place.] Which afforded no conveniency for lodging, nor any supply of food.

13 But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people.

Signifying, that it was not his will to dismiss the people, and send them scattering abroad into the adjacent cities, towns, or houses; and that there was no need of it, but that his will was that they should be supplied with provisions out of their stock:

And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes.] And these loaves were barley loaves, and the fishes small, *John vi. 9.*

Except we should go and buy meat for all this people.] Which would at least cost them two hundred pence; and which they represent as impossible to

be done, either through want of so much money, or the scarcity of provision in those parts; where, had they money, it would be difficult, at least, to get such a quantity of provisions at once, which so great a number of persons required.

14 For they were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company.

Beside women and children, *Matt. xiv. 21.*

And he said to his disciples, Make them to sit down by fifties in a company.] And by hundreds also: some companies had a hundred apiece in them, and others fifty; and which was done partly for the more easy numbering of them, and partly and chiefly for the more convenient distribution of food to them; see *Mark vi. 39, 40.*

15 And they did so, and made them all sit down.

The disciples did not dispute the case any longer with Christ, but obeyed his orders, and ranged the multitude in companies, a hundred in one, and fifty in another; and ordered them to sit down in their distinct companies and ranks upon the green grass. The Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, "and they all sat down;" and so it is read in some copies of the Vulgate Latin version.

16 Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.

Into his hands, being brought to him by the disciples from the lad that had them:

And looking up to heaven.] To his Father there, from whom all the mercies and blessings of life come:

He blessed them.] Either asked, or commanded a blessing on them, that they might multiply and increase; that there might be a sufficiency for all the people, and that they might be nourishing to them. Beza observes, that in his most ancient copy it is read, "he blessed upon them;" which perfectly agrees with the Jewish way of speaking, *ברך על הדבר* "he that blesseth upon the bread;" *ברך על היין* "he that blesseth upon the wine;" and so upon the fruits of trees, and upon the fruits of the earth, and upon other things (c):

And brake.] The loaves, and divided the fishes into parts:

And gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.] As they sat in ranks, and in their distinct companies.

17 And!

(c) *Mishn. Berachot, c. 6. §. 3, 2. 3. 4. 5. 7.*

17 And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets.

Every one had a part, and enough:

And there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets.] See the note on Matt. xiv. 20.

18 ¶ And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

Praying to his God and Father, for himself, as man and mediator; for the success of his Gospel, and the increase of his interest; and for his disciples, that they might have a clearer revelation of him; and which they had, as appears in their after-confession of him by Peter, as the mouth of them all. The place where he now retired for private devotion, was somewhere in the coasts of Caesarea Philippi; for he was now gone from the desert of Bethsaida, as appears from *Matt. xvi. 13*; and when he is said to be *alone*, the meaning is, that he was retired from the multitude, but not from his disciples; for it follows,

His disciples were with him.] In this solitary place:

And he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?] What are the sentiments of the common people, or of the people in general concerning me? The Alexandrian copy, and the Arabic version read, men, as in Matt. xvi. 13. see the note there.

19 They answering, said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias, and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again.

This was the opinion of some who thought that he was risen from the dead, as in *y. 7*.

But some say, Elias.] The prophet, and the Tishbite; who, according to the Jewish notion, was to be the forerunner of the Messiah, so in y. 8.

And others say, That one of the old prophets is risen again.] See the note on y. 8. and thus were they divided in their sentiments about him.

20 He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering, said, The Christ of God.

Which was the main thing he had in view in this private conference; and in order to introduce which, he puts the former question:

Peter answering.] In the name of the rest of the disciples, they assenting to it:

Said, The Christ of God.] See the note on chapter ii. 26. The Persian version reads, "Christ

"God;" the Messiah, who is the Son of God, and God over all, blessed for ever. The Cambridge copy of Beza's reads, the Christ, the Son of God.

21 And he straitly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing;

Though he highly approved of this their confession, and pronounced Peter blessed upon it; and signified that it was a discovery which flesh and blood could not make, but what was made to him by his Father; yet he gave them a strict charge, and laid his commands on them,

To tell no man that thing.] That he was the Messiah, and the eternal Son of God, and the true God, as well as the Son of man, and really man: the reasons for this see in the note on Matt. xvi. 20.

22 Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

In his person and character, in his soul and body, at the hands of God, and of men, and devils:

And be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes.] Who made up the grand sanhedrim of the nation: by these he was to be, and was rejected, as the Messiah; and when put up with another which should be released, that other should be preferred, and he rejected; and which was done at the instigation of these men, who were the builders; of whom it was foretold that they should reject the head stone of the corner, Psalm cxviii. 22.

And be slain.] Or put to death, with the death of the cross.

And be raised the third day.] According to the types and prophecies of the Old Testament. This he added for the comfort of his disciples.

23 ¶ And he said to them all, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

Said not only to all the disciples, but "to the multitude," as the Arabic version renders it, who were now called unto him, with his disciples, as is clear from *Mark viii. 34*.

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.] The same is said here, as in Matt. xvi. 24. Mark viii. 34. see the notes there; only here the word daily, is added: and which, though as Beza observes, is not in the Complutensian edition, nor in five ancient copies; yet is in others, and in the Vulgate Latin, and in all the Oriental versions; and to be retained, as having a very considerable emphasis in it; shewing that afflictions, trials, and persecutions

cutions of one sort or another, are to be expected every day by the people of God, and to be continually submitted to, and bore with cheerfulness.

24 For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life, for my sake, the same shall save it.

See the note on *Matthew* xvi. 25.

25 For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

Or what profit will it be unto him? All the honours, riches, and enjoyments of it, will be of no use and service to him if he himself is lost.

And lose himself] Or his own soul; for he that loses his soul, which is his better and immortal part, loses himself:

Or be cast away] Finally, and eternally, or suffer loss of eternal happiness and glory; that is, perishes, and is destroyed with an everlasting destruction; see the note on *Matthew* xvi. 26.

26 For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.

Ashamed of my person and offices, of me, as the Messiah, Saviour, and Redeemer, of my grace, righteousness, blood, and sacrifice:

And of my words] Of the doctrines of the Gospel, one and another of them. In Mark it is added, *in this adulterous and sinful generation*; having a peculiar respect to the people of the Jews, and the age in which Christ lived; but is true of any other people and age in which men live:

Of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he shall come in his own glory] In the glory of his human nature, when his glorious body, as now in heaven, shall be seen by all; and in the glory of his office, as mediator, and the judge of all the earth; and in the glory of his divine nature, which will appear in the resurrection of the dead, in the gathering of all nations before him, in separating one sort from another, and in passing and executing the definitive sentence on them; particularly the glory of his omnipotence and omniscience will be very conspicuous:

And in his Father's] Which is the same with his own, as he is the Son of God, and the brightness of his glory; and which, as mediator, he has from him, and will be the object of the saints vision to all eternity:

And of the holy angels] Who shall attend him at

his second coming, and be employed in various offices under him. The Syriac version renders these last clauses as they are in *Matthew* xvi. 27, *Mark* viii. 38. *in the glory of his Father, with his holy angels*; see the notes there.

27 But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

And let it be received as a truth; you may assure yourselves of it, that not only at the last day, the Son of man will come in this glorious manner, and shew his resentment to all such as have been ashamed of him; but also

There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God] See the Gospel-dispensation visibly taking place, both among Jews and Gentiles, upon the resurrection of Christ, and the pouring forth of his Spirit; and when it should come in power both in the conversion of God's elect in great numbers, and in the destruction of the Jewish nation, for their rejection of the Messiah; see the note on *Matt.* xvi. 28.

28 ¶ And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.

About a week after he had declared the above things, at, or near Cæsarea Philippi. The other Evangelists, Matthew and Mark say, it was six days after: the reason of this difference is, because Luke takes in the day in which he delivered those sayings, and that in which he was transfigured, and they only reckon the intermediate days:

He took Peter and John and James] The same that he admitted to be with him at the raising of Jairus's daughter, and in the garden afterwards:

And went up into a mountain to pray] To his God and Father, that his disciples might have a visible display of his glory, as an emblem and pledge of that in which he shall hereafter appear: it was usual with Christ to go up into a mountain to pray; see *Matt.* xiv. 23. *Luke* vi. 12. see the note on *Matt.* xvii. 1.

29 And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering.

His countenance became exceeding bright and glorious, it shone like the sun, *Matt.* xvii. 2. and hereby his prayer was answered; and thus, as Christ was heard and answered, whilst he was yet speaking, so are his people sometimes; and even their

their countenance is altered, when they are favoured with communion with God, and instead of a sad and dejected countenance, they have a cheerful one.

And his raiment was white and glistering] It was as white as the light, as snow, and whiter than any fuller on earth could whiten it, as the other Evangelists say, and so glistered exceedingly; see the notes on *Matt. xvii. 2.* and *Mark ix. 3.*

30 And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias:

Men of great note and fame:

Which were Moses and Elias] The one the giver of the law from God to the people of Israel, as well as the redeemer of them from Egyptian bondage; and who led them through the wilderness, to the borders of Canaan's land; and the other a prophet famous for his zeal for God and his worship; and who was translated, soul and body, to heaven: these appeared and talked with Christ on the mount; and what they talked of is mentioned in the following verse; see the note on *Matt. xvii. 3.*

31 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

Appeared in a very glorious manner, in most divine and beautiful forms to Christ, and to his disciples:

And spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem] The word rendered *decease*, is *Exodus*, the name of the second book of Moses; so called from the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, it gives an account of; and which departure is expressed by this word in *Heb. xi. 22.* and to which the allusion is here. Death is a departure out of this world, and goes by this name, *2 Pet. i. 15.* and so here it signifies Christ's death, or exit, which he was to make at Jerusalem; and Moses and Elias talk with him about this; the nature, manner, use, and near approach of it; and to which they might encourage him, as man. The sufferings and death of Christ were what Moses and the prophets had foretold; and these two speak of the same things now; and which must serve to confirm what Christ a few days ago had shewed his disciples, that he must go to Jerusalem, and there suffer and die. Dr Lightfoot thinks, that the ascension of Christ to heaven is contained in the word *Exodus*, which was his final departure out of this world, as well as his sufferings and death; and especially if there is any allusion to the Israelites' departure out of Egypt, which was in victory and triumph; and the rather, because the time of his receiving up, *2. 51.* may be thought to refer to this; and so

Moses and Elias conversed with him, not only about his sufferings and death, but his ascension: and of which also the *Exodus*, or going of Elias out of this world to heaven, which was by a translation and ascension, was a figure. Some render this word, *expedition*, and think it refers to the whole affair of the redemption of Christ's people by him from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law, by his sufferings and death; of which the deliverance of the people of Israel out of Egypt was a lively representation; an expedition which Moses was sent upon, and accomplished: but now the discourse turns upon an expedition of greater importance, which shortly was to be accomplished at Jerusalem, where Christ was to be arraigned and condemned, and then suffer without the gates of it, in order to obtain eternal redemption for the whole Israel of God.

32 But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

The other two disciples, James and John:

Were heavy with sleep] As they afterwards were in the garden, while Christ was praying, as he had been now; being weary with the labours of the day past, and it being now night, as is very probable, since that was an usual time Christ spent in prayer:

And when they were awake] The Syriac version reads, "scarcely awake;" they were so heavy with sleep, that it was with difficulty they were awaked out of it, even by the rays of light and glory that were about them. The Ethiopic version adds, *suddenly*; such a lustre darted from these glorious forms, especially from the body of Christ, as at once surprised them out of their sleep; and being thoroughly awake,

They saw his glory] The brightness of his countenance, and the whiteness of his raiment;

And the two men that stood with him] Moses and Elias, and the glory in which they appeared.

33 And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said.

That is, as Moses and Elias departed from Christ, or "when they began to depart," as the Syriac version renders it; or "would depart," as the Arabic and Persic versions; seemed desirous of going,

ing, or made some signal or other by which the disciples perceived they were about to go; for, as yet, they were not gone:

Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here, let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias] See the note on *Matt. xvii. 4.*

Not knowing what he said] Nor what to say, as Mark observes, being in a surprise, and not in a situation to consider and weigh things well, whether what he said was right and proper, or not; see the note, as before.

34 While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

While Peter was making the above request, before an answer was returned, a cloud appeared, a very uncommon one, as a symbol of the divine presence:

And overshadowed them] Jesus, Moses, Elias, and the disciples:

And they feared as they entered into the cloud] Either as they themselves entered into it, that coming gradually over them, because of the glory of it, and the solemnity that attended it; or as Moses and Elias entered into it; and so the Syriac and Perfic versions read, "they feared when they saw Moses and Elias enter into the cloud;" which took them out of their sight; just as the cloud received Jesus out of the sight of his disciples, when he ascended to heaven, *Acts i. 9.*

35 And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

See the note on *Matt. xvii. 5.*

36 And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

The above words were delivered, and it was heard no more:

Jesus was found alone] By his disciples; Moses and Elias being gone, and he in the same form in which he was before his transfiguration.

And they kept it close] As Christ strictly charged them, when coming down from the mount with them; *Matt. xvii. 9.*

And told no man in those days, any of those things which they had seen] No, not any of their fellow-disciples, until that Christ was risen from the dead.

37 ¶ And it came to pass, that on the next

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day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him.

For Jesus and his disciples staid all night on the mountain:

When they were come down from the hill] To the bottom of it:

Much people met him] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Perfic versions read, "met them."

38 And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son: for he is mine only child.

One that was in the company, and among the multitude, that met him:

Cried out] With great vehemence and earnestness:

Saying, Master] Doctor, or Rabbi:

I beseech thee] Most humbly, for he was now on his knees:

Look upon my son] With pity and compassion, and help him:

For he is mine only child] Wherefore he was dear unto him, and he was greatly concerned for him, and earnestly desirous of his being restored to health; and this he mentions, to move the compassion of Christ.

39 And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him, hardly departeth from him.

An evil spirit, the devil, as in *7. 42.* seizes and possesses him at once:

And he suddenly crieth out] In a most terrible manner, giving dreadful shrieks, as soon as he perceives that he is seized by the demon:

And it teareth him that he foameth again] Throws him into convulsions, so that he foams at the mouth: and so we read (*d*) of a son of a certain Jew, that "A certain spirit passed before him and hurt him; convulsed his mouth, and his eyes; and his hands were convulsed, and he could not speak."

And bruising him] By dashing him against the wall, or throwing him to the ground:

Hardly departeth from him] Is very loth to leave him, even after he has distressed, convulsed, and bruised him in this dreadful manner, such was his cruelty and malice; see the notes on *Matt. xvii. 15.* and *Mark ix. 18.*

40 And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not.

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(*d*) Zohar in Lev. fol. 21. 4.

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The nine disciples that were left behind, whilst Christ and the other three were gone up to the mountain :

To cast him out] The devil out of his child :

And they could not] See the note on *Matt. xvii. 16.*

41 And Jesus answering, said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither.

Said to the father of the child, and those that were with him; and with a particular view to the scribes and Pharisees, who had been insulting the disciples, and triumphing over them, because of their inability to cast out this evil spirit: for the words are not spoken to the disciples, as they might seem at first view to be, and as the Persian version renders them, "and Jesus turned his face to the disciples, and said;" but to the unbelieving Jews,

O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither] See the note on *Matt. xvii. 17.*

42 And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father.

Whilst he was in the way bringing to Jesus, before he came to him :

The devil threw him down, and tare him] Knowing who Jesus was, and that he was able to dispossess him; and having reason to believe he would, was resolved to do all the mischief he could, and give him all the pain and distress he was able, whilst he was in him; and therefore threw him to the ground, and convulsed him in a terrible manner at the same time :

And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit] For his malice and cruelty, and ordered him to depart :

And healed the child] By dispossessing the spirit :

And delivered him again to his father] Free from the possession, and in perfect health, and which must be very pleasing and acceptable to him.

43 ¶ And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,

Or, "at the greatness, or majesty of God;" which was displayed in this cure: for the great power of God was manifestly seen in it, to the astonishment of the disciples, who could not cure this child, and the parent and friends of it, and of

the whole multitude; and to the confusion of the scribes and Pharisees :

But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did] And were applauding him for them, and speaking in his praise on account of them :

He said unto his disciples] Privately, when they were alone together, the following words, that he might not seem to be lifted up with the praise of men; and also to shew their inconstancy, that those who now admired him, would one day crucify him; and to take off the thoughts of the disciples from a temporal kingdom and glory, they were so much in expectation of, and which every miracle of Christ, and the applause he got thereby among men, strengthened them in.

44 Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.

The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, "in your hearts:" Christ's sense is, that they would diligently attend to them, seriously consider them, and carefully lay them up in their memories; and what he refers to, are not the words he had spoken, but what he was about to say; namely, as follow:

For the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men] By whom he should be killed, though he should rise again the third day; see *Matt. xvii. 22.*

45 But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying.

Understood not what was meant by being betrayed into the hands of men, and by his being put to death; they knew not how these things could possibly be, for they could not by any means reconcile them with the notions they had of a temporal Redeemer, and victorious Messiah :

And it was hid from them, that they perceived it not] The true meaning of this saying was hid from their understanding, which was veiled with the above notion of the worldly grandeur of the Messiah, that they did not take it in :

And they feared to ask him of that saying] Of the meaning of it; imagining that he had a secret, mystical meaning in it, which they could not reach; lest he should reproach them with their dullness and stupidity; or should rebuke them with the like sharpness and severity he had reproved Peter not long ago, upon the same head.

46 ¶ Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest.

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The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions read, "a thought entered into them;" suggested very likely by Satan, which broke out into words, and issued in a warm dispute among them; and this was in the way, as they were travelling from Cæsarea Philippi to Capernaum; see *Mark ix. 33.*

Which of them should be greatest? That is, in the kingdom of heaven, as in *Matt. xviii. 1.* in the kingdom of the Messiah, which they expected would be a temporal one: wherefore the dispute was not about degrees in glory, nor in grace; nor who should be the greatest apostle and preacher of the Gospel; but who should be prime minister to the king Messiah, when he should set up his monarchy in all its grandeur and glory.

47 And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him,

Not by any words he had heard; for the dispute was on the road, as they came along behind him; but as the omniscient God, who is the discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart, he was privy to all their ambition, and the vanity of their minds, and to all their reasonings and debates, though he was before them, and out of the reach of hearing of them: and when he came to Capernaum, after having asked them what they disputed about by the way;

He took a child and set him by him] The Ethiopic version reads, "before them," the disciples; and Matthew and Mark say, he set him in the midst of them; all which were true, Jesus sitting in the midst of them; so that the child he set by him, was in the middle of them, and before them; see the note on *Matt. xviii. 2.*

48 And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

Or one such little child, as in *Matt. xviii. 5.* and so the Syriac version here, "a child like to this;" and the Arabic version, "one like to this child;" not in age, but in meekness and humility; one that is not proud and haughty, ambitious of worldly honour, and envious at the superior state of others: whoever receives such an one into his house and heart, and the Gospel he preaches,

In my name] Because he belongs to me, is sent by me, and represents me, and delivers my message:

Receiveth me] Personated by him, and it will be so taken;

And whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me] See the note on *Mark ix. 37.*

For he that is least among you all] That is so in his own opinion, and behaves as such in his conduct, who is lowly and meek, and humble; and so the Ethiopic version, rather interpreting than translating, renders it, "for he that makes himself humble, who is lesser than all;" who considers himself as the least of the apostles, and unworthy to be one, as did the apostle Paul:

The same shall be great] Shall be highly honoured with gifts, and made greatly useful, as the above-mentioned apostle was. A saying like this, the Jews have (e); "Every one, *הקטן עמו* "that makes himself little, for the words of the law "in this world, *ועשה גדול* "shall be made great "in the world to come;" that is, in the days of the Messiah: and again it is said by (f) them, "Worthy is he that makes himself little in this world, how great and high shall he be in that world!—Whoever is little shall be great, and he that is great shall be little."

49 ¶ And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbid him, because he followeth not with us.

The Syriac and Perfic versions read, "our Master!"

We saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbid him] See the note on *Mark ix. 38.*

Because he followeth not with us] The Syriac, Perfic, and Ethiopic versions read, "because he followeth not thee with us;" did not join in company with them, and follow Christ along with them, and as they did.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us.

Or forbid not him, or any other so doing: for he that is not against us is for us: in two exemplars of Beza's it is read, *for he is not against you*; the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions, instead of *us*, in both clauses read *you*, and so likewise the Perfic and Ethiopic versions; see the notes on *Mark ix. 39, 40.*

51 ¶ And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,

Or "days were fulfilled," an usual Hebrew phrase; when the period of time fixed for his being in Galilee

(e) T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 85. 4.

(f) Zohar in Num. fol. 70. 1. & Tofaphat in Zohar in Gen. fol. 76. 2.

admit him, because he favoured the temple-worship at Jerusalem; otherwise his bare going thither could not give the offence.

54 And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

The Persic version reads thus; "when James and John, and the disciples saw this;" that is, the other disciples besides them, so making all the disciples say what follows; whereas only those two are intended, who having been the messengers, were the more provoked at this indignity to their Lord and Master:

They said, Lord, Wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them? Being enraged at this conduct of the Samaritans towards Christ, and burning with love to him, and zeal for his honour; being Boanerges's, sons of thunder, they were for punishing of them in a most terrible manner, even with fire from heaven; by which Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities of the plain, were destroyed: this they doubted not of doing, knowing what miraculous power was conferred upon them; but did not think proper to attempt to exert it, until they had asked leave of Christ to do it:

Even as Elias did] Upon the two captains of fifties, with their fifties, as recorded in 2 Kings i. 9-12. This clause was wanting in a certain copy of Beza's, and is not in the Vulgate Latin version; but is in other copies and versions, and by all means to be retained.

55 But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

He turned himself about to them, and looking upon them with a stern countenance, sharply reproved them for their intemperate zeal, their passion of wrath and anger, and desire of revenge:

And said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of] Or do not consider that this is not the true spirit of zeal, but of anger and revenge; and is not agreeable to the spirit of the meek and humble followers of Christ, or to the Spirit of God, and those gifts of his bestowed on them, nor to the spirit of the Gospel-dispensation: so good men, for want of attention, may not know sometimes from what spirit they act; taking that for a good one, which is a very bad one; being covered with specious pretences of love and zeal, and the examples of former saints; not observing the difference of persons, times, and things.

56 For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save *them*. And they went to another village.

Meaning himself, in his state of humiliation, *Is not come to destroy mens lives*] The word *mens*, is omitted in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions; and both words, *mens lives*, are left out in the Arabic version:

But to save them] As they might easily observe, by his casting out devils from the bodies of men, and healing all sorts of diseases: and therefore, though it was agreeable to the legal dispensation, and the times of Elijah, to punish offenders in such a manner, it was not agreeable to the Gospel-dispensation, and to the ends of the Messiah's coming into the world: so far in this verse, and the latter part of the former verse, are left out in five ancient copies of Beza's, and in the Ethiopic version, but are in the rest of the Eastern versions, and in other copies, and are rightly retained:

And they went to another village] In Samaria, more civil and courteous, and less prejudiced, and where they got lodging and entertainment.

57 ¶ And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

As they went from one village of the Samaritans to the other; though if this is the same history related in Matthew viii. 19. it was as Christ went from Capernaum to the sea-side, in order to go to the other side of it; and must be inserted here, without regard to the order of time:

A certain man said unto him] If the same as in Matthew, he is there said to be a scribe;

Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest] The Arabic and Ethiopic versions, read these words by way of question, "Lord, shall I not follow thee whithersoever thou goest?" See the note on Matthew viii. 19.

58 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

Both the words of this man to Christ, and Christ's answer to him, are exactly the same as in Matthew, which makes it look as if it was the same history; though it is not improbable, that Christ might be accosted in the same manner by another person, at another time and place, and return a like answer to each; see the note on Matthew viii. 20.

59 And

59 And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

According to Matthew, one of his disciples, who had attended him some time, and whom he now called to the ministerial work; see the note on *Matt. viii. 21*. The Ethiopic version reads, "another said to him, shall I not follow thee?" But without any foundation: they are certainly the words of Christ, directed to another person, at the same time he met with the former:

But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father] See the note on *Matt. viii. 21*.

60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

See the note on *Matt. viii. 22*.

But go thou and preach the kingdom of God] That the kingdom of heaven is at hand, the Gospel-dispensation is now ushering in, and the kingdom of the Messiah is setting up; go and publish the things concerning the kingdom of grace, which lies not in outward rites and ceremonies, but in righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and declare the things relating to the kingdom of glory, and eternal life and happiness; assert, that unless a man is born again, and has a better righteousness than his own, he is neither fit for, nor has he a right unto everlasting bliss.

61 And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house.

To him, as the Syriac and Arabic versions add; that is, to Christ; the Ethiopic version reads, "and a third said to him;" for this is the third person mentioned in this relation of Luke's; only two are spoken of by Matthew, but a third is added here:

Lord, I will follow thee] He moves it himself, to be a disciple of his, and a preacher of his Gospel, only with this condition:

But let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house] As Elisha desired Elijah, that he might go and kiss his father and his mother, and then he promises he would follow him, *1 Kings xix. 20*. The Syriac version adds, "and I will come;" and the Persic, "and give commands, and then will I come:" and the phrase not only signifies, that he desired to take leave of his friends, but to compose and set in order his family affairs, and dispose of his worldly effects among his domestics, relations, and friends, in the best manner he could; and

then he should have leisure, and be at liberty to follow Christ, and attend his service.

62 And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

The copulative *and*, is left out in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions:

No man having put his hand to the plough] Or *plough-share*, as reads the Syriac version; or *plough-handle*, as the Persic; referring, as Beza thinks, to the business of Elisha in *1 Kings xix. 19*.

And looking back] Behind him; for the ploughman ought to look before him, on his plough, and the ground he is ploughing, or he is not fit to be a ploughman; nor will he make proper furrows, or do his work well: and so he that enters upon the ministerial work, and looks back, and engages himself in the affairs of the world, sets his heart on them, and spends his time in them,

Is not fit for the kingdom of God] That is, to preach the kingdom of God, as in *ψ. 60*. He cannot serve God and mammon, his own interest, and the interest of Christ; he cannot rightly perform the work of the ministry, whilst his thoughts and time are taken up in the affairs of the world.

CHAP. X.

In this chapter we have the ample commission which Christ gave to the Seventy disciples to preach the Gospel, and the full instructions he gave them concerning their journey, *ψ. 1—12*. He threateneth certain cities with heavy judgments for their impenitency, *ψ. 13—16*. The Seventy return rejoicing at what, through Christ's name, they had done, *ψ. 17—20*. He returneth thanks to his Father, *ψ. 21—24*. Answereth the lawyer's question; teaching him what he must do to inherit eternal life, *ψ. 25—28*. Telleth him who is his neighbour, by the similitude of a man falling among thieves, and relieved by a Samaritan, *ψ. 29—37*. And being entertained by Mary and Martha, he preferreth Mary's piety before Martha's carefulness, *ψ. 38—42*.

AFTER these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place whither he himself would come.

After the calling and mission of the twelve apostles, and giving them their powers, commissions, and instructions, with other things that followed thereon; see chapter ix. 1.

The Lord appointed other seventy also] Not that he had appointed before seventy, and now made an appointment of seventy more; but as the Syriac version

version renders it, "Jesus separated out of his disciples seventy others:" that is, besides the twelve, whom he chose and called out from among the multitude of the disciples, and ordained them apostles, he selected and ordained *seventy others*, in allusion to the seventy elders of Israel, Numb. xi. 16, 24, 25. The Vulgate Latin and Perfic versions read, *seventy-two*, and so does Epiphanius (a). The Jewish sanhedrim is sometimes said to consist of seventy-one (b), and sometimes of seventy-two (c); though commonly said to be of the round number seventy, as these disciples might be. The abovementioned ancient writer gives the names of some of them, as the seven deacons; Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas; together with Matthias, Mark, Luke, Justus, Barnabas, Apelles, Rufus, and Niger. The names of all these disciples, according to ancient traditions, though not to be depended on, are given in an alphabetical order, with the places where they afterwards presided as bishops, or pastors, by a late learned writer (d), and are as follow, namely, Agabus, the prophet; Amphias, of Odyslus, sometimes called *Amphiatius*; Ananias, who baptized Paul, bishop of Damascus; Andronicus, of Pannonia, or Spain; Apelles, of Smyrna, or according to others, of Heraclea; Apollo, of Cæsarea; Aristarchus, of Apamea; Aristobulus, of Britain; Artemas, of Lustra; Asyncritus, of Hyrcania; Barnabas, of Milain; Barnabas, of Heraclea; Casar, of Dyrrachium; Caius, of Ephesus; Carpus, of Berytus in Thracia; Cephas, bishop of Konia; Clemens, of Sardinia; Cleophas, of Jerusalem; Crescens, of Chalcedon in Galatia; Demas, a priest of idols; Epænetus, of Carthage; Epaphroditus, of Andriace; Erastus, of Paneas, or, according to others, of the Philippians; Evodus, of Antioch; Hermas, of Philippi, or Philippolis; Hermes, of Dalmatia; Hermogenes and Phygellus, who followed Simon Magus; Hermogenes, bishop of the Megarenes; Herodion, of Tarsus; James, the brother of our Lord, of Jerusalem; Jason, of Tarsus; Jesus Justus, bishop of Eleutheropolis; Linus, of Rome; Luke, the Evangelist; Lucius, of Laodicea in Syria; Mark, who is also John, of Bibliopolis, or Biblus; Mark the Evangelist, bishop of Alexandria; Mark, the sister's son of Barnabas, bishop of Apollonia; Matthias, added to the apostles; Narcissus, of Athens; Nicanor, he died when Stephen suffered martyrdom; Nicolaus, of Samaria; Olympius, a martyr at Rome; Onesiphorus, bishop of Corone; Parmenas, of the Soli; Patrobulus, the same with Patrophas, in Rom. xvi. 14. of Puteoli, or as others, of Naples; Philemon, of

Gaza; Philemon, (in the Acts he is called Philip) by whom the eunuch of the queen of Ethiopia was baptized, of Trallium, of Asia; Philologus, of Sinope; Phlegon, bishop of Marathon; Phygellus, of Ephesus; Prochorus, of Nicomedia in Bithynia; Pudens; Quartus, of Berytus; Rhodion, a martyr at Rome; Rufus, of Thebes; Silas, of Corinth; Sylvanus, of Thessalonica; Sosipater, of Iconium; Stathenes, of Colophon; Stachys, of Byzantium; Stephen; the first martyr; Tertius, of Iconium; Thaddæus, who carried the epistle of Jesus to Edessa, to Abgarus; Timon, of Bosra, of the Arabians; Trophimus, who suffered martyrdom with the apostle Paul; Tychicus, bishop of Chalcedon, of Bithynia; Tychicus, of Colophon; Urbanus, of Macedonia; and Zenas, of Diospolis. According both to this account, and Epiphanius, Luke was one of these seventy; and he is the only Evangelist that makes mention of the appointment of them:

And sent them two and two before his face] As he did the twelve before, to be his harbingers and forerunners:

Into every city and place whither he himself would come] Which he intended to visit: he sent them beforehand to acquaint the inhabitants of it; and prepare them by their ministry, for the reception of him; as John the Baptist, who was in a more eminent sense, the harbinger and forerunner of Christ, went before him in his ministry, and prepared the way for him.

2 Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

That is, the Lord Jesus, as the Ethiopic version expresses it; he said to the seventy disciples, what he had before said to the twelve apostles in Matt. ix. 37, 38. where are the same words as here:

The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest] For though there was such a number of disciples called to the ministerial work, and sent out, there was still need of more; so great was the harvest of souls, or number of hearers, that the labourers were yet but few; and therefore the Lord of the harvest, and whose all souls are, was to be prayed unto to send forth more laborious preachers; see the notes on Matt. ix. 37; 38.

3 Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

Go into all the villages, towns, cities, and places, where he directed them to go, to make ready for him.

Behold,

(a) Contr. Hæres. hæres. 20.

(b) Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrim, c. 1. §. 3.

(c) Misn. Yadaim, c. 3. §. 5. Aben Ezra in Num. 11. 25.

(d) Fabrici Lex Evangelii, p. 115, 216, &c.

(b) Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrim, c. 1. §. 3.

(c) Misn. Yadaim, c. 3. §. 5. Aben Ezra in Num. 11. 25.

(d) Fabrici Lex Evangelii, p. 115, 216, &c.

[*Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves*] As harmless, innocent, profitable, and defenseless creatures, among spiteful, malicious, cunning, and cruel men; see the note on *Matt. x. 16*.

4 Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.

The Syriac version reads, *purfes*, to put money, gold, silver, and brass in; and the prohibition regards the money in the purse chiefly:

[*Nor scrip*] The Syriac version here also reads in the plural number, *scrips*, to put victuals in, provisions of any sort for their journey, which they were not to carry with them, any more than money to buy food with.

[*Nor shoes*] Any more than those upon their feet; see the notes on *Matt. x. 9, 10*.

[*And salute no man by the way*] That they might not be retarded, and hindered in their journey by tedious ceremonies, and long inquiries into the health of persons and friends, and the business they were going about, and places where; and by discourses and confabulations, drawn out to great length, as was often the case at meeting on the road: and, for the same reason, a like charge is given to Gehazi, *2 Kings iv. 29*. and which, as the Jewish commentators on the place observe (*e*), was, that he might not multiply words with persons he met with, and might not be stopped by the way; and that his intention might be in his work, and his mind might not turn to any other thing, either by word or deed. So our Lord's intention, by this order, was, not to teach them incivility, or to be morose and uncourteous: but that they might dispatch their business with the utmost expedition, and rather forego some common civilities and ceremonies, than to neglect, or in the least to hinder a work of so much importance as they were sent about: and this was the more necessary, since, according to the Jewish maxim (*f*), "Prevent every man with a salutation;" they saluted all that they met, which took up time and hindered business. Some sorts of persons indeed were excused, as those who were mourners (*g*) for the dead, and such as kept fasts for rain (*h*): but such were not these disciples; they neither mourned, nor fasted, nor could they, so long as the bridegroom was with them.

5 And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house.

When ye come into any city, town, or village, [*First say, Peace be to this house*] Salute the inhabitants in the usual form, saying, *Peace be to*

you; wishing them all happiness and prosperity, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. This shews our Lord did not disapprove of civil salutations.

6 And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again.

If there be any elect person or persons in the same house, whom God has chosen to partake of peace by the blood of Christ, and the benefits arising from it; and of a conscience-peace in their souls, upon the best foundation; and of eternal peace in the world to come, though yet in a state of nature; and which may be known by this sign;

[*Your peace shall rest upon it*] The salutation, or wish of peace, shall be well taken, and gratefully received; and upon this you will be kindly invited into the house, and used well by those of the family;

[*If not, it shall turn to you again*] If there are no sons of peace, no elect persons there, your salutation, or wish of peace and prosperity to the family, will be despised and rejected, and will return to you without any good effect upon them.

7 And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

Where the sons of peace are, and the peace rests, and into which you are invited, and kindly received and used:

[*Eating and drinking such things as they give*] Or rather, "such things as are with them;" as the Vulgate Latin renders it; or, "of that which is theirs;" as the Syriac version; all one, and with as much freedom as if they were your own: the reason follows,

[*For the labourer is worthy of his hire*] What you eat and drink is your due; what you ought to have; your diet is a debt, and not a gratuity; see the note on *Matt. x. 10*.

[*Go not from house to house*] As if fickle and inconstant, as if not satisfied with your lodging and entertainment, and as seeking out for other and better, or as if burdensome where they were; see the note on *Matt. x. 11*. The Jews have a proverb, expressing the inconvenience and expensiveness, and the danger of moving from place to place: "He that goes, מִיָּד לְיָד" "from house to house," (loses his) shirt (that is, comes to distress and poverty) from place to place (his) "life (*i*); or he is in great danger of losing his life.

8 And

(*e*) Jarchi, Kimchi & R. Levi. Ben Gersom in *2 Kings iv. 29*.

(*f*) Pirke Abot, c. 4. §. 25. (*g*) Maimon. in *Mishn. Moed*

Katon, c. 3. §. 6. (*h*) Mishn. Taanith, c. 2. §. 7.

(*i*) Bereshit Rabba, §. 39. fol. 34. 3.

8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you :

Into whatsoever house in it ye go, and apply to for lodging and entertainment,

And they receive you] Readily and cheerfully,

Eat such things as are set before you] Though ever so mean, accept of them, and do not object to them on that account, lest it should be thought you serve your own bellies, and seek to gratify your appetites; nor, on the other hand, do not think any thing too good for you, or that you are burdensome or chargeable, but eat as if it were your own; nor ask questions about the cleanness and uncleanness of it, or whether it has been tithed or not; but feed upon it without any scruple.

9 And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

Of all their bodily diseases, which would not only shew their power and warrant, their mission and commission, but also their goodness and beneficence to men; and would be a sufficient return for what they eat and drank :

And say unto them] Not only to the sick that are healed, and those in the house in which they were, but to all the inhabitants of the city ;

The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you] The Gospel-dispensation, the kingdom of the Messiah, and even the Messiah himself, as might be concluded from the miracles they wrought; and thus by their ministry and works, were they to go before Christ, and prepare his way.

10 But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say,

On the other hand, Christ here directs how to behave towards other cities they should come to, and be rejected :

And they receive you not] Refuse to admit them into their houses, or provide in any shape for them, nor hear their message :

Go your ways out into the streets of the same] The Ethiopic version reads, “ cast the dust off your feet into the streets of it: and say;” aloud, in the most public manner, in the ears of all the people, as follows :

11 Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you : notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

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The Syriac version adds, “ to our feet;” and so in Beza's most ancient copy, and the Arabic and Persian versions read, “ which cleaves to our feet;” which agrees with *Matt. x. 14. Mark vi. 11.*

We do wipe off against you] For a testimony against them, that they had been with them, and were rejected by them; see the notes on *Matt. x. 14. Mark vi. 11.*

Notwithstanding be ye sure of this] They might assure themselves of this, and which will be an aggravation of their guilt, and increase their punishment another day :

That the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you] Was at their very doors, since the ministers of it, of the Gospel-dispensation, the harbingers of the Messiah, who were sent to publish his Gospel, to proclaim him as King, and declare that his kingdom was at hand, had been with them, and they had despised them.

12 But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city.

The same that he said to the twelve apostles, when he sent them out, *Matt. x. 15.*

That it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city] By that day is meant, the famous day to come, the last day; the day of judgment, as it is expressed in Matthew; and so the Ethiopic version reads here, “ it shall be better in the day of judgment.” Sodom was a very wicked city, and was destroyed by fire from heaven for its iniquity, and its inhabitants suffer the vengeance of eternal fire: and there was also Gomorrah, a neighbouring city, guilty of the same crimes, and shared the same fate; and which is mentioned along with Sodom in Matthew; and is here read in the Persian version. And the sense of the whole is, that though the iniquities of Sodom and Gomorrah were very great, and their punishment very exemplary; yet as there will be degrees of torment in hell, the case of such a city, which has been favoured with the Gospel, and has despised and rejected it, will be much worse than the case of those cities which were devoured by fire from heaven; and than that of the inhabitants of them in the future judgment, and to all eternity; see the note on *Matt. x. 15.*

13 ¶ Wo unto thee, Chorazin! wo unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

See the note on *Matt. xi. 21.*

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Wo unto thee, Bethsaida] A city of Galilee, a fishing town, from whence it has its name, and was the native place of those two fishermen, Peter and Andrew: very likely Chorazin was near it, since they are here, and in Matthew, mentioned together; and wo is pronounced upon them both for their impenitence and unbelief, which were attended with aggravating circumstances:

For if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you] Meaning both the ministry of the word by Christ, which was with power and authority, and the miracles of Christ, which were the works of almighty power, and shewed him to be the mighty God: these were not done in Tyre and Sidon, cities in Phoenicia; for though our Lord was on the borders of those places, yet not in them, they being Gentile cities, to which he was not sent, and in which he did not preach, nor do miracles; but he did both in Bethsaida and Chorazin, and they repented not of their sins; nor did they embrace his doctrine, though confirmed by miracles; whereas, in all likelihood, humanly speaking, had the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon had the like advantages,

They had a great while ago repented] They would have repented immediately, it would have been soon visible in them, of which they would have given proof, by

Sitting in sackcloth and ashes] Which was an outward token of repentance, used by penitent sinners, as by the Ninevites, and others. The same things are said at another time, and on another occasion, as here; see the note on *Matt.* xi. 21—24.

14 But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.

Or, "in the day of judgment," as read the Syriac, Persian, Ethiopic, and Gothic versions; and as it is in *Matt.* xi. 22.

Than for you] The inhabitants of Chorazin and Bethsaida, who will be more severely punished than those Gentile cities; for by how much greater were their light, privileges, and advantages against which they sinned, by so much will be their severer punishment.

15 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell.

Referring either to the situation of it, which was on a very high hill; or to its privileges, through the ministry and miracles of Christ: or the phrase may be expressive of the pride and loftiness of the inhabitants of it, who were elated with the mercies they enjoyed, it being a most delightful, pleasant, and comfortable place to live in, as its name signifies. It was a famous port, commodiously

situated by the sea of Tiberias; and, as Josephus says (k), was in an excellent temperament of the air, and watered with a most choice fountain, called by the same name.

Shalt be thrust down to hell] Meaning either the low condition to which it was to be, and has been reduced in a temporal sense, and continues in to this day; there being nothing of it now remaining, as travellers, who have been eye-witnesses of it, say (l), but a few little houses and cottages; or else the sad and miserable condition of the inhabitants of it hereafter: and so it is, that such who have lived in great plenty and pleasure in this life, and have thought themselves to be the favourites of heaven, and that they should enter there, shall be thrust down to hell by the arm of vengeance, with the utmost indignation in God, and shame to themselves: it follows in Matthew, *For if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day; but I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the day of judgment, than for thee.*

16 *Het hat heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.*

This is said for the encouragement of the seventy disciples, that though they would be rejected by some, they would be received by others, who would hear them, and embrace their doctrine, as if the Messiah himself had been among them; they looking upon them as personating him: and so Christ himself considers them as ambassadors in his name, and as representing his person, taking what is done to them as done to himself; see the note on *Matt.* x. 40.

And he that despiseth you, despiseth me] Every degree of contempt cast upon them, by words or actions, Christ looked upon as cast on himself, and will resent it another day, and punish for it. The despising of wise men, or doctors, and their disciples or scholars, was accounted with the Jews a very heinous crime, and was severely punished both by excommunication and fines: for thus it is said (m), "A great iniquity it is to despise the wise men, or to hate them. Jerusalem was not destroyed until the disciples of the wise men were despised in it, as it is said, 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 16. *But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets:*" As if he should say, They despised those that taught his words, &c.

And

(k) De Bello Jud. l. 3, c. 35.
in Benj. Itinerar. p. 68.
Tora, c. 6, §. 21, 12.

(l) Vid. L'Empereur, Not.
(m) Maimon, Hilch, Talmud

And he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me] This is said to aggravate the sin of the despisers of Christ's ministers, and to deter from it; since the contempt does not terminate in them, nor even in Christ, but reaches his Father also. The Ethiopic version adds, "and he that heareth me, heareth him that sent me;" but is not supported by any copy, or any other version.

17 ¶ And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

The Syriac version adds, "whom he had sent:" these disciples having received orders and instructions from Christ, went as he directed them; and when they had finished their embassy, they returned again to him, and gave him an account of their journey and success. The Vulgate Latin and Perfic versions read here, "the seventy-two," as they do in *ψ. 1.*

With joy] With great joy, as read the Syriac and Perfic versions; notwithstanding the difficulties that had attended them, the reproaches cast upon them, the ill-treatment they might have met with in some places, and the labours and fatigues of their journey, and the dangers they had been exposed to:

Saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name] They found the miraculous power conferred on them was greater than they at first imagined, or could collect from what Christ said to them, who only bid them *heal the sick, ψ. 9.* but when they came to make use of it, they found they had a power of casting out devils; not in their own name and strength, but in the name, and through the power, and by the authority of Christ; and this had thrown them into an extasy of joy; and in a sort of a rapture they express themselves, as men astonished at the powers bestowed on them.

18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

In order to abate their surprise, and reduce their transport of mind:

I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven] Meaning, that this was no news to him, nor any surprising event, that devils should be cast out of men, and be in a state of subjection; for as he existed as the eternal Son of God before his incarnation, he was present, and saw him and his angels fall from heaven, from their first estate, their habitation of bliss and glory, down to hell, upon their sin and rebellion, as violently, swiftly, and suddenly, as the lightning falls from heaven to earth: and when he sent out these his disciples, as soon as they began their work, and all along in it, he, by his divine

omniscience, saw the powers of darkness falling before their ministry and miracles; and he also foresaw how Satan hereafter, in a more conspicuous manner, would fall before the preaching of his Gospel by his apostles, not only in Judea, but especially among the Gentiles, where he, the prince of this world, would be cast down from his throne; and out of his kingdom; so that what they related, as it was what he knew before, it was but little in comparison of what he himself had seen long ago, and what he foresaw would be; and even he would give them power to do other miraculous works besides these.

19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

Which power may be literally understood, as in *Mark xvi. 18. Acts xxviii. 3, 5.* or figuratively of the devil, and his principalities and powers, and all his emissaries, who, for their craft and cunning, and for their poisonous and hurtful nature and influence, may be compared to serpents and scorpions:

And over all the power of the enemy] Of mankind in general, and of the seed of the woman, Christ and his people in particular. Christ has a power over all his power, his whole posse of devils, even the power of the air, of which he is prince; and he communicated this power to his disciples, even to the seventy: adding,

And nothing shall by any means hurt you] Not the most hurtful and poisonous animals, nor the most malicious persecutors on earth, nor all the devils in hell: as the former venomous creatures, when took up in their hands, should not hurt their bodies; so the other, whatever they might be permitted to do with respect to their lives, and outward estate, should never hurt their souls, and the eternal welfare of them; nor even hinder the work of God prospering in their hands.

20 Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

Not that their power was enlarged, or that they had the same as before:

That the spirits] Evil spirits, or devils.

Are subject unto you] And come out of men at your command; rejoice not so much in this, or chiefly and principally; not but that it was matter of joy, both with respect to the gift bestowed upon them, and the benefits men received by it, and the glory that was brought to Christ through it:

But rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven] In the book of life, called the Lamb's book of life,

life, written from the foundation of the world, in divine predestination to everlasting glory and happiness: which shews that God's election to eternal life is of particular persons, of persons by name; that it is sure, and certain, and immutable, being in opposition to what is written in earth, *Jer. xvii. 13.* that the knowledge of this may be attained to, through the grace of God, the revelation of Christ, and the witnessings of his Spirit; and that this is matter of the greatest joy, since it is the foundation and security of all the blessings of grace and glory.

21 ¶ In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

Rejoiced in his human soul: his heart was filled with joy, not so much at the success of the seventy disciples, and the subjection of the devils to them, as in the view he had of the spread of the Gospel, and of the revelation and application of the truths of it to multitudes of mean and despicable persons, while it was rejected by the wise and learned; and particularly at the sovereign and distinguishing grace of God towards the elect, whose names are written in heaven; upon the mention of which his soul was so affected, that he broke out in an exulting strain, into thanksgivings to God, in the following manner,

And said, I thank thee, O Father, &c.] See the notes on *Matt. xi. 25, 26.* in three ancient copies of Beza's, and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, it is read, "in the holy Spirit;" and the Persian version reads, "he spake, or conversed with the holy Spirit:" but the former reading and sense are best.

22 All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.

In some ancient copies, and in the Syriac, Persian, and Ethiopic versions, before these words, are read, "and, turning to his disciples, he said;" All things, &c.

And no man knoweth who the Son is.] What is his name, his nature, his perfections and glory; and how he is the Son of God, his only begotten Son:

But the Father.] Who begat him, and whose own, and proper Son he is:

And who the Father is.] What are his perfections, purposes, grace, greatness, mind, and will:

But the Son.] Who is of him, and lay in his bosom:

And he to whom the Son will reveal him.] In himself, by his Spirit; see the note on *Matt. xi. 27.*

23 ¶ And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see:

Turned both to the twelve apostles, and seventy disciples;

And said privately.] Or, "to them apart:" the phrase *privately* is wanting in the Vulgate Latin version:

Blessed are the eyes that see the things that ye see.] The person of the Messiah, his kingdom setting up in the world, miracles wrought by him, and Satan falling before him; see the note on *Matt. xiii. 16.*

24 For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

As Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were prophets, as well as patriarchs; and David, Solomon, and others:

Have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.] Meaning himself, doctrines, and miracles; see the note on *Matt. xiii. 17.*

25 ¶ And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

Up from his seat, having been hearing Christ preach, very likely, in some synagogue: when and where this was, is not certain. The Syriac, Persian and Ethiopic versions call this man a scribe; and a lawyer and a scribe were the same, as appears from *Matt. xxii. 35.* compared with *Mark xii. 28.*

And tempted him.] Or tried him, whether he understood the law, or whether he would say any thing contrary to it, and see if he could gain any advantage against him, and expose him, and get credit and applause to himself:

Saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?] The same question as was put by the young ruler in *Mark x. 17.* see the note on *Matt. xix. 16.* for they were both of the same complexion, and upon the same foundation, seeking eternal life by their own works:

26. He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

He said unto him] That is, *Jesus*, as all the Oriental versions express it. Christ, with great propriety, sends him to the law, to see and observe what was written there, what are the terms and conditions of life, as fixed there; partly, because this man, by his office and character, was an interpreter of the law; and partly, because his question was, *What shall I do?*

How readest thou?] In the law, every day; referring to the *Keriat Shema*, the reading of the *Shema*, that is, those words in *Deut. vi. 4*, &c. *Hear, O Israel*, &c. morning and evening (*n*), as appears by his answer.

27. And he answering, said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

This was part of their phylacteries, which they recited every day; see the notes on *Matt. xxiii. 37, 39*, and on *Mark xiii. 28, 29*.

28. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

It is so written, and read; and this, as if he should say, is the sum and substance of the law, and what that requires men should do: wherefore,

This do, and thou shalt live] For the bare reading of it was not sufficient; though these men placed great confidence in reading this passage, or in reciting their phylacteries, of which this was a part, morning and night. Our Lord intimates by this, that, according to the tenor of the law, eternal life was not to be had without a complete and perfect performance of the duties of love to God, and to their neighbour, contained in these words; and this he suggests, in order to convince him of the impossibility of obtaining life by the works of the law, since such a performance cannot be made by man.

29. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

Upon the foot of his own righteousness, and to make himself appear to be righteous to others; for this the Jews thought themselves able to do, both to justify themselves before God by their own works, and make it out to men that they were truly righteous persons; and it is a maxim with them, that "Every one, *אדם אחד*," that justifies himself, below (on earth,) they justify

"him above (or in heaven) (*a*)."
No wonder then that this man was desirous of justifying himself; and in order to which he said,

And who is my neighbour?] He takes no notice of God, and love to him, as coming into the account of his justification, only of his neighbour; thinking when this question was answered, he should be very able to make it out, that he was not wanting, neither in doing justice between himself and his neighbour, nor in shewing kindness and beneficence to him; for by his neighbour he meant only an Israelite; one of the same nation and religion with himself. So the Jews commonly interpret the word *neighbour*, either of one that is related to them in nature, קרוב "that is near akin" to them in blood (*p*); or that professes the same religion as they do, and whom they call "a neighbour in the law," and so they explain the passage now cited, *and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*; *אדם אחד* that is, "who is thy neighbour in the law (*q*):" for they will not allow a Gentile, no, not even a proselyte of the gate, to be a neighbour (*r*). This notion Christ opposes, and disproves in the following parable, which is an answer to the lawyer's question.

30. And Jesus answering, said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

Said the following things; which may either be considered as a narrative of matter of fact, or as a supposed case, and delivered by way of parable; and in either way, though the general design of it is in answer to the lawyer's question, to shew who may be called a neighbour; and that a man who is a stranger, and accounted an enemy, yet, doing acts of mercy, kindness, and beneficence, to one in distress, ought to be accounted a neighbour; and has a much better title to such a character, than one of the same nation and religion, who takes no notice of a distressed object; yet it may be considered, as representing the sad estate and condition of mankind by the fall, and their recovery by Christ; whereby he shews himself to be their best neighbour, and truest friend:

A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho] The distance between these two places, the Jews say (*s*), was ten *parasangs*, that is, forty miles; for every

(a) *Vid. Misn. Beracot, c. 1. §. 7. 2.*

(p) *Kimchi in Psalm xv. 3.*
(q) *Moshe Kotsensis Mitzvot Torat, pr. affirm. 9.*
(r) *Maimoni Hilchot Kotsch, c. 2. §. 11. Vid. Ib. c. 4. §. 117.*
(s) *T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 20c. 21. & 39. 20. Bartenora in Misn. Tammid, c. 3. §. 8.*

every *parſa* was four miles, and ten *parſa's* are expreſſly ſaid (t) to be forty miles; which muſt be underſtood of the leſſer miles; otherwiſe a *parſa* itſelf, was but a mile: the Jews had two ſorts of miles, the greater was 2000 cubits, the leſſer 1000 cubits: the man is ſaid to go down from the one to the other, becauſe Jeruſalem ſtood on high ground, and Jericho in a valley. This certain man may repreſent mankind fallen in Adam, from a ſtate of happineſs, into miſery: human nature was originally in one man, but one man was created at firſt, and he had all human nature in him, and was the repreſentative of mankind; he was made upright, but ſinned, and fell from his uprightness, and all mankind in him: he may be ſaid to go down from Jeruſalem, which ſignifies peace, and the viſion of it; and was a city compaſt together, beautiful and well ſituated; where were the worſhip of God, and his Shekinah, or divine preſence; to Jericho, a city accuſed by Joſhua, and a very wicked place in the days of Chriſt: ſince man, by ſinning againſt God, departed from his happy and peaceful ſtate, from a ſtate of peace and tranquillity with God, with the holy angels, and even with the beaſts of the field; and alſo from peace and ſerenity in his own conſcience, as well as from communion with God, and from his pure worſhip and ſervice, to a ſenſual, earthly, worldly, wicked, and accuſed ſtate:

And fell among thieves] In the way to Jericho, was a place called Adomim, which ſignifies bloods; becauſe much blood was ſhed there, by the frequent incurſions of thieves and robbers, as Jerom (u) obſerves; and was about four hours journey from Jericho (x): and by the man's falling among thieves, may be expreſſed mankind coming into the hands of ſin and Satan, which are as robbers, that ſteal, kill, and deſtroy; ſince theſe have robbed man of his honour, defaced the image of God in him, and deprived him of the glory of God, and were murderers of him from the beginning:

Which ſtripped him of his raiment] As thieves and robbers are uſed to do; ſignifying the loſs of original righteouſneſs by ſin, which was a covering to man, in which he could appear before God; and was very ornamental to him, being pure and perfect in its kind, though only a creature's righteouſneſs, and a created one; and which was natural and loſeable, as the event has ſhewn: hence man is become a naked creature, has nothing to cover himſelf with, but ſtands expoſed to the law, juſtice and wrath of God; is deſtitute of a righteouſneſs, nor can he work out one that will ſtand him in any ſtead, or juſtify him before God:

And wounded him] Which is the common uſage

of ſuch men; and may ſet forth the morbid and diſeaſed condition that ſin has brought man into; being from the crown of the head, to the ſole of the foot, full of wounds, bruises, and putrifying ſores; and ſuch as are in themſelves mortal, and incurable by any, but the great phyſician of ſouls, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and yet men are naturally inſenſible of them, and unconcerned about them:

And departed, leaving him half dead] Or "near death," as the Arabic verſion renders it; which may be applied to death, natural, ſpiritual, and eternal: to death natural, which comes by ſin, ſeeing it is but one part, or half of the man that dies this death, namely, his body; and to a ſpiritual death, or the death of the ſoul, which is dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, whiſt the body is alive; and to eternal death, to which men are expoſed for ſin, and are under the ſentence of it, though not executed; and in each of theſe ſenſes may be ſaid to be half dead; and which is no ways to the advantage of the doctrine of man's free-will, and the powers and abilities of it; as if man was not in a ſpiritual ſenſe ſo dead, that he can do nothing in a ſpiritual manner; but the phraſe is uſed to ſhew the power of ſin, and the malice of Satan; and yet that man is ſtill recoverable by the grace of God.

31 And by chance there came down a certain prieſt that way: and when he ſaw him, he paſſed by on the other ſide.

A prieſt who had been at Jeruſalem to take his turn in the courſes, and was now returning to Jericho, where the ſtationary men were, to which he belonged: the Rabbanis teach (y), "That there were twenty-four courſes of prieſts and Levites in the land of Iſrael, and there were twelve at Jericho." And elſewhere (z) "The tradition is, that four and twenty thouſand were the ſtation from Jeruſalem, and half a ſtation from Jericho; though Jericho was able to furniſh out a perfect ſtation itſelf; but for the ſake of dividing the glory to Jeruſalem, it produced but half a ſtation." So that it is no wonder to hear of prieſts and Levites, paſſing to and fro in this road. Nor was this a chance matter with reſpect to God, by whoſe providence all things are ordered, directed, and governed; nor any wonderful thing with reſpect to men, which fell out in an uncommon way beyond expectation; the phraſe only ſignifies, that ſo it came to paſs:

And when he ſaw him, he paſſed by on the other ſide] When he ſaw him naked, and in ſuch a bloody condition, he might take him for one really dead, and therefore croſſed the way on purpoſe, left he ſhould

(t) T. Bab. Peſachim, fol. 93. 2. & Gloſſ. in ib.

(u) Ad Euthochium, torn. 1. fol. 59. l. K.

(x) Maſius in Joſh. xv. 7.

(y) T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 27. 1.

(z) T. Hieroſ. Peſachim, fol. 30. 3. & Taanith, fol. 67. 4.

should any ways touch him, and be defiled by him, and so break the law, and incur the penalty of it, mentioned in *Numbers* xix. 16. or to shun so horrible a fight; or rather, through hardness of heart, and want of compassion.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

The place where the poor man lay in this deplorable condition :

Came and looked on him] And that was all; but neither spoke a comfortable word, nor administered any relief to him, or in the least assisted him :

And passed by on the other side] As the priest had done before him. By the *priest* may be meant, the moral law, and by the *Levite* the ceremonial law; and so by both, the whole law of Moses; and intimates, that no mercy is to be expected from thence: the law makes no abatement in its demands, nor any allowance for the fall and weakness of man; nor is it become milder under the Gospel-dispensation; nor will it accept of an imperfect, though sincere obedience, in the room of a perfect one; and is deaf to all repentings, cries, and tears: no relief is to be had from thence, for a naked, wounded, and dead man; no robe of righteousness to cover a naked soul; for by the law is the knowledge of sin, but not a justifying righteousness by the deeds of it: for the deeds of the law, performed by sinful men, are impure and imperfect; and were they pure and perfect, they would be unprofitable, and could not justify in the sight of God from former sins; for could they, they would establish boasting, and disannul the death of Christ, and frustrate the grace of God; and therefore righteousness cannot be by the law, that leaves a man as naked as it finds him: nor is there any healing by it to a wounded conscience; there is no pity from it, no justification by it, no pardon through it, no expiation or atonement of sin, by obedience to it; no word of comfort is spoken by it; so far from it, that when it comes with power, it opens the wounds of sin, fills the conscience with wrath and terror, destroys all the man's former hopes of happiness, and leaves him where it found him: without healing him itself, or pointing out a physician to him; much less can it give life to a dead sinner: spiritual life is not communicated by it, nor can eternal life, or any true hope of it, be attained through it; it is so far from it, that it is the killing letter, and the ministration of condemnation and death.

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him.

By whom Christ may be meant; not that he was

really so, for he was a Jew, a son of Abraham and of David, according to the flesh; but he was so called by the Jews, *John* viii. 48. and was treated as such by them: and since it is the design of the parable in general to shew, that he that does acts of kindness and mercy to persons in distress, is a neighbour in the truest sense, though he is not an Israelite, but even a Samaritan, who was, above all men, hated by the Jews; why may it not be thought to be the view of Christ, in particular, to prove himself to be the best neighbour and friend of men, though he was traduced by the Jews as a Samaritan?

As he journeyed] Which may design the assumption of human nature, which is sometimes expressed, by his coming from his Father, by his descending from heaven, and coming into this world; which phrases intend his incarnation, and carry in them the idea of *journeying*; for as his ascent to heaven is expressed by taking a journey, *Matt.* xxv. 15. so may his descent from heaven; and while he was here on earth, he was as a stranger and pilgrim, as a sojourner and traveller:

Came where he was] Put himself in the law-place, and stead of his people, who fell with the rest of mankind in Adam; he became their surety from eternity, and clothed himself with their nature in time; he took upon him their sins, as their representative, and fulfilled the righteousness of the law on their account, and bore the penalty of it in their room:

And when he saw him] Christ saw the elect before the fall, as they were chosen in him, and given unto him, in all the glory they were to be brought into; when he loved them, and his delight was with them: and when he came to redeem them, he saw them as follows; as lost, as weak and strengthless, as wicked, and as the worst of sinners; as ungodly, and enemies; as children of wrath by nature, as others; and he shed his blood for them, and washed them from their sins, that he might present them to himself a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; just such an one he had seen them to be, in the glass of his Father's purposes, in his counsel and covenant; and he sees them in their blood, and in the impurity of their nature, when he comes to call them by his grace:

And he had compassion on him] The compassion of Christ on his elect, is to be seen in his eternal covenant-engagements; for his tender mercies have been ever of old; and in his assumption of their nature, which was through his own, as well as the tender mercy of his Father; and in the redemption of them, which was in love and pity; and also in their regeneration and conversion; for the

great things there and then done for them by him, are owing to his compassion.

34 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

Those wounds which sin had made; it being part of the work of Christ, to *bind up the broken-hearted*, to heal wounded sinners, and restore comforts to mourners; and which he does, by

Pouring in oil and wine] By which, in general, may be designed, the blood of Christ, applied to the conscience of a wounded sinner; which cleanses from all sin, heals all the wounds and diseases of sin, cheers and revives fainting spirits, gives ease, peace, and pleasure; and is therefore exceeding valuable and precious: and in particular, by *oil* may be meant, the grace of the Spirit of God; compared unto it, for its sweet smell, its cheering and refreshing virtue and efficacy, and its cooling, softening, suppling, and healing nature: and by *wine*, the doctrines of the Gospel; such as free justification by Christ's righteousness, and pardon through his blood; which, when applied to distressed minds, cause joy and gladness, and them to forget their sorrow, and remember their misery no more: and the *pouring in* of these, may denote the plentiful effusion of Christ's blood, and the riches of his grace in the application of it; and the freeness and generosity of this action, which is his own; for man cannot do it. It was usual with the Jews, to mix oil and wine together, for the healing of wounds: hence those rules and traditions (a); "They anoint a linen cloth for a sick man on the sabbath; when? When they mingle the oil and the wine on the sabbath-eve, but if they do not mingle it on the sabbath-eve, it is forbidden. It is a tradition, says R. Simeon ben Eleazar, R. Meir pronounced it lawful, to mingle wine and oil;" and "and to anoint the sick on the sabbath." So oil and wine were mingled together, and used to heal the sore occasioned by circumcision (b):

And set him on his own beast] By which may be meant, either the *red horse* of Christ's humanity, *Zech. i. 8.* to which he has united all his people; and in which he has bore their persons, and has represented them, and still bears them on his heart: or the *white horse* of the Gospel, *Rev. vi. 2.* compared to a *horse*, for its strength, swiftness, and usefulness in battle; and to a *white* one, for the purity of its doctrines, the joy and peace it brings, and the victory it obtains: and this is Christ's own,

and on which he himself rides, and shews his glory and goes forth conquering and to conquer; and on which he sets his people, and they are carried out of the reach of men and devils to destroy them, and are caused to ride on the high places of the earth:

And brought him to an inn] A church of Christ, where the Gospel guides, and directs, and carries souls: saints are not now at home in their proper city and country, they are travellers here, and need refreshment by the way; and a church of Christ is as an inn, for the entertainment of such: it is large, and has room enough for as many as come to it; and is well stored with provisions of all sorts, signified by *bread*, and *milk*, and *wine*, a *feast of fat things*, a furnished table, Zion's provisions, the goodness and fatness of God's house; and has rivers of pleasure, and very good lodgings, sure dwellings, and quiet habitations; all which is agreeable to weary travellers: and hither Christ brings his people, whom he saves and calls; it is his will that they should be in a church-state, and it is his own act to bring them there, and it is their great privilege to be thither brought:

And took care of him] Clothed him with his righteousness, fed him with the choicest of provisions, gave him reviving cordials of love, refreshing promises, exceeding great and precious ones; and large supplies of grace, with protection and preservation from all evils.

35 And on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

Having taken care of him all night, and put him into a comfortable way, leaves him, though in good hands; as Christ does his people, to learn to live by faith upon him:

And he took out two pence] Two Roman *denarii*, or pence; which amount to about fifteen pence of our money, and were equal to the half shekel, paid for the redemption of an Israelite: by which may be meant, not the law and Gospel; for though these both bear the image and superscription of God, and are his current coin, and are both delivered by Christ, and to be regarded and dispensed by the ministers of the word; yet they are not of equal value and use, as these *two pence* seem to be: wherefore, rather the two Testaments, Old and New, may be designed, since they are both inspired by God, and dictated by the same Spirit, and bear the same impress; and are alike, and exactly agree, as two pence do; and are given to the ministers of the Gospel to handle, and make use of for the good of souls. Unless the two ordinances

(b) T. Hieron. Sabbat, fol. 14. g. & Remy, fol. 19. s.
(A) Mish. Sabbat, c. 19. §. 2.

dinances of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, should rather be thought to be intended: these bear the same stamp and authority, and are both jointly necessary to communion, and church-order; and are given by Christ to his ministers, to be administered by them, for the good of his church; and are similar, as two breasts are, they being both breasts of consolation, and agree in setting forth the sufferings and death of Christ: or rather, the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, to qualify men for the work of the ministry; which both come from the self-same Spirit of God, and are jointly necessary to fit a man for such service; and are given for the benefit and advantage of the Lord's people, and in an eminent manner by Christ, on his departure from hence, when he ascended on high, and received gifts for men, and gave them to them:

And gave them to the host] Or the keeper and master of the inn; by whom are meant, the ministers of the gospel; who are governors in the church, the masters of that spiritual inn; who have the provisions of God's house under their care, and whose business it is to invite travellers in, and to dress their food for them, and set it before them, and bid them welcome:

And said unto him, Take care of him] Which is the work of Christ's ministers to do; by feeding souls with the words of faith and sound doctrine; by ministering the Gospel to them in a faithful manner; and by a constant administration of the ordinances of it; and by keeping a diligent watch over them, both with respect to principles and practice; and by speaking a word in season to them:

And whatsoever thou spendest more] Faithful ministers spend much, and are at great expence in taking care of the souls of men; in fervent and frequent prayer to God; in diligent searching the scriptures; in the laborious ministry of the word and ordinances; and in the constant exercise and improvement of their spiritual gifts; and in the loss of reputation and credit, and of health, and sometimes of life itself:

When I come again, I will repay thee] Christ will certainly come again a second time, to judge both quick and dead; and then he will recompence his ministers for all their toil and labour, care and expence; he will then bid them, as good and faithful servants, enter into the joy of their Lord; and when they shall every one receive the reward of his own work, in a way of grace, and shall shine as the stars in the firmament, for ever and ever.

36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

VOL. II.

The priest, the Levite, or the Samaritan, *work* *Thinkest thou, was neighbour to him that fell among the thieves?*] The priest and Levite that passed by, and took no notice of him, and gave him no relief, neither by words nor actions; or the Samaritan, that did all the above kind and generous things to him?

37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

Meaning the Samaritan; which he was obliged to declare, though of another country and religion, and accounted as an enemy; yet the case was so plain, as put by Christ, that he could not with any honour or conscience say otherwise:

Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise] Such like acts of beneficence and kindness, though to a person of a different nation and religion, and though even an enemy; and by so doing, thou wilt not only appear to be a good neighbour thyself, but to love thy neighbour as thyself.

38 ¶ Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.

As Christ and his disciples went from Jerusalem, having been at the feast of tabernacles, *John vii. 2, 10.* or at the feast of dedication, *John x. 22.* to some other parts of Judea:

That he entered into a certain village] Called Bethany, which was about fifteen furlongs, or two miles from Jerusalem, *John xi. 1, 18.*

And a certain woman, named Martha] This is a common name with the Jews; hence we read of Samuel bar Martha (c), and of Abba bar Martha (d), and of Isaac bar Martha (e); and of Martha, the daughter of Baithus (f), who is said to be a rich widow; and this Martha here, is thought by Grotius to be a widow also, with whom her brother Lazarus, and sister Mary lived: though sometimes, this name was given to men; so we read of Martha (g), the uncle of Rab, who had five brethren; and the same writer observes (h), that it is not known whether Martha is a man or a woman, but this is determined here:

Received him into her house] In a very kind and courteous manner, she being mistress of it; and having known

(c) T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 13. 2. & 25. 2. & Pesachim, fol. 106. 2. Yoma, fol. 19. 2. Juchasin, fol. 76. 2.

(d) T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 121. 2. Juchasin, fol. 72. 2.

(e) T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 33. 2. Juchasin, fol. 91. 1.

(f) Mifn. Yebamot, c. 6. §. 4. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 18. 1. Succa, fol. 52. 2. Cetubot, fol. 104. 1. Gittin, fol. 56. 1.

Juchasin, fol. 57. 1.

(g) Juchasin, fol. 99. 1.

(h) Ibid. fol. 105. 1.

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known Christ before, or at least had heard much of him, and believed in him, as the true Messiah.

39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

Which also was a common name with the Jews, and is the same with *Miriam*; so we read of Mary, the daughter of Nicodemon, the same perhaps with Nicodemus; and the same person that is before called Martha, the daughter of Baithus, is sometimes called Mary, the daughter of Baithus (i), though these two names are certainly distinct:

Which also sat at Jesus' feet] Was a disciple of his, as well as Martha; for it was usual for disciples, or the scholars of the wise men, to sit at the feet of their masters, to which the allusion is in *Deut.* xxxiii. 3. see the note on *Mt.* xxii. 3. The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Coptic versions, read "at the Lord's feet;" so Beza's ancient copy, and one of Stephens's; and the Syriac, Persian, and Ethiopic versions read, "at our Lord's feet." The phrase is expressive of her great affection for Christ, her humble deportment, and close attention:

And heard his word] Or discourse; for as soon as he entered into the house he began to preach to those that were in it, and that came along with him, improving every opportunity for the good of souls; and Mary heard him with great eagerness and diligence, affection, pleasure, and profit.

40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

Or "was drawn off," from hearing the word, from attending on Christ; being taken up in providing for him, and those that came with him; in dressing the food, or in ordering her servants how she would have every thing done, and in overlooking them, that every thing was done in proper order; so that she had a great deal of business upon her head and hands, which distracted her thoughts, or took them off of divine things, and put her in great hurry and concern. The Ethiopic version renders it, "Martha laboured in preparing many things for him;" making a large and sumptuous entertainment: and the Persian version, which is rather a comment than a translation, renders it, "Martha was busied in preparing food, and making a feast;" sparing no cost nor pains thinking nothing too good, nor too grand, for such a guest as she had in her house:

And she came to him and said, Lord, dost thou not

(i) *Echa Rabbati*, fol. 49. 2.

care that my sister hath left me to serve alone?] She came to him; that is, to Jesus, as the Persian version expresses it: she came out of the room where she was getting ready the entertainment, into the room where Christ was preaching; and, as the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, "she stood and said:" she did not sit down at his feet, as Mary did, to hear his word, but stood as about to go away again, after she had said what she came about: she did not think fit to speak to Mary herself, though perhaps she might do that first; who shewing an unwillingness to go with her, she therefore applies to Christ, as believing that he would, with her, look upon it as a very reasonable thing, that she should take her part with her; and that a word from him would go a great way with her sister. And she seems to speak, not only by way of complaint of Mary, who had left her to prepare and serve up this entertainment alone; but even of Christ himself, in some sort, as if he had not shewed that care and concern in this matter, which she thought was necessary. However, she was willing to have his sense of her sister's conduct, and hoped, and even doubted not, but that he would be of the same mind with herself:

Bid her therefore that she help me] That she join, assist, and put an helping hand in this service; speak but a word to her, give her orders, and she will observe and obey.

41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

Calling her by her name, and repeating it,

Martha, Martha] Which expresses great intimacy and friendship, and much earnestness, and, as it were, pitying her present situation and circumstances:

Thou art careful and troubled about many things] Intimating, that she was over-anxious, and too solicitous, and more thoughtful and careful than she need be: he did not require such preparations for him, and so much attendance; she gave herself an unnecessary trouble in providing so many things for his entertainment, when less would have sufficed; so that instead of joining with her in her request, he reproves her for her over-anxious care and solicitude, to have a nice and plentiful feast. The Persian version gives a sense quite contrary to the design of the text, rendering the words thus, "thou art adorned in all things, and hast the preference above many women."

42 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Meaning,

Meaning, not that one dish of meat was sufficient, and there was no need of any more, in opposition to Martha's carefulness in preparing many; for this is too low a sense of the words; which yet some ancient writers have given into: but rather, the hearing of the word, the Gospel of Christ, which Mary was engaged in; and which, ordinarily speaking, is necessary to the knowledge of Christ, and salvation by him, and to faith in him, *Rom. x. 14, 17.* not that this is the only needful thing; nor does Christ say there is but one thing needful, but that there is *one thing needful*; for there are other things that are also needful, and useful; as meditation and prayer, and attendance on, and submission to the ordinances of baptism, and the Lord's supper, and all the duties of religion: but Christ's meaning seems plainly to be, that Mary's hearing the word from his mouth, and at his feet, was one necessary thing, in opposition to Martha's many unnecessary ones, about which she was cumbered: and

Mary had chosen that good part] Or *the good part, or portion*; Christ, the sum and substance of the word she heard, and eternal life and salvation by him. God himself is said to be the portion of his people, and a good one he is, and a portion that lasts for ever; and so is Christ; see *Psal. lxxiii. 26. Lam. iii. 24.* where the Septuagint use the same word as here. The heavenly inheritance also, eternal glory and happiness, is the saints portion: it is called in *Col. i. 12.* the part, or portion of *the inheritance with the saints in light.* The word answers to the Hebrew word, *חֵלֶק* as in that saying of the Misnic doctors (*k*), "All Israel have, *חֵלֶק* "a part, or portion" in the world to come." All the Oriental versions add, "for herself;" and this choice she made, not from the natural power of her own free-will, but as directed, influenced, and assisted by the Spirit and grace of God, and in consequence of God's eternal choice of her unto salvation by Jesus Christ: and the part she chose is, that

Which shall not be taken away from her] By men or devils: faith which comes by hearing of the word, and so every other grace of the Spirit, is what can never be lost; nor an interest in God, as a covenant-God, or in Christ as a Saviour, nor a right and title to, nor meetness for eternal life; nor that itself, can be taken away, or the believer ever be deprived thereof.

CHAP. XI.

In this chapter Christ, by the desire of the disciples, teacheth them how to pray, v. 1—4. And by a similitude of a friend and a father, sheweth that those

that pray in faith shall be heard, v. 5—13. He casteth out a devil, and fully answereth the blasphemy of those who said he did so by Beelzebub, v. 14—23. Sheweth the wretched condition of that man into whom the unclean spirit returneth, v. 24—26. A woman blesseth the womb that bare him; his answer, v. 27, 28. Telleth them, as Jonas was a sign to the Ninevites, so the Son of man should be to the Jews, v. 29, 30. Sheweth under the similitude of a candle, that the Gospel must flourish, v. 31—36. He severely reproveth the scribes, Pharisees, and lawyers, for their hypocrisy, oppression and cruelty against the apostles, v. 37—52. wherefore they lay a snare for him, v. 53, 54.

AND it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

The following directions concerning prayer, though they agree with those in *Matt. vi. 9, &c.* yet were delivered at another time, and in another place, and upon another occasion: Christ was then in Galilee, now in Judea; he gave the former directions unasked for, these at the request of one of his disciples; the other were given as he was preaching, these immediately after he had been praying; as soon as he had done a work he was often employed in, as man and mediator, on account of himself, his disciples, cause, and interest: and this was done

In a certain place] Perhaps in the mount of Olives, which was not far from Bethany, where we heard of him last, since this was a place where he used to abide in the night, and pray, *Luke xxi. 37.* The Arabic version reads, "in a desert place;" and after he had been at Bethany, he did go to a country near the wilderness, to a city called *Ephraim*, *John xi. 54.*

When he ceased] From praying; when he had concluded his prayer, and finished all his petitions, and was off of his knees:

One of his disciples] Perhaps one of the seventy disciples who had not heard the summary of prayer, and the directions about it, before given on the mount, *Matt. vi. 9.* The Perfic version reads, "his disciples;" as if they all united in the request: and

Said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples] Who as Tertullian says (*a*), brought in a new order and method of praying, and gave his disciples some instructions and directions concerning it, much better than what the Jews in common

T 2

common

(*k*) Misn. Sanhedrim, c. 11, §. 1.(*a*) Contr. Marcion, l. 4, c. 26.

common had: the Jews were taught to pray; said R. Jochanan ben Zaccai to Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, "Hast thou not learnt Kerefh Shemah, our Tephilah, or prayer (b)?" And this disciple looking upon his Lord and master as much better qualified to give directions in this important affair, than even John himself was, requests of him that he would do so; and what might put him upon it at this time, seems to be, his observing that Christ had now been at prayer.

2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

That is, *Jesus*, as the Syriac and Persic versions express, who directed his speech to all the disciples; for though but one of them addressed him, it was in the name of the rest: and besides, the instructions Christ was about to give concerned them all, even those that heard them before, and those that had not:

When ye pray, say, Our Father, &c.] The last petition is left out in the Vulgate Latin; see the notes on *Matt.* vi. 9, 10.

3 Give us day by day our daily bread.

Or, "for the day;" or, "every day," as the Syriac version renders it; see the note on *Matt.* vi. 11.

4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

Beza's most ancient copy reads *debts*, as in *Matt.* vi. 12. see the note there; and which best agrees with the phrase *indebted*, after mentioned:

For we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil] See the notes on *Matt.* vi. 12, 13. The doxology there used, and the word *Amen*, are here omitted. Some of the petitions in this prayer are not delivered in the very same words as they were in Matthew. The three first petitions are word for word the same; for though the third petition is different in our translation, it is the same in the original. The fourth and fifth vary: in Matthew the fourth is, *Give us this day our daily bread*; here in Luke, *Give us day by day our daily bread*. The fifth in Matthew is, *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*; here, *And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us*. And these verbal variations, though the sense is the same, together with the omission of the doxology, and the word *Amen*, shew, that this prayer

was not designed to be an exact form, and to be so used, but as a directory of prayer. I have, in my notes on *Matt.* vi. 9, &c. shewn the agreement there is between the petitions in this prayer, and some that were made use of among the Jews; and have supposed that our Lord took notice of such petitions, which the good people among the Jews frequently used; and which he approved of, and singled out, and put them into the order and method in which they stand, with some alterations for the better, to be a directory to his disciples and followers. Which to suppose, I apprehend, does not at all countenance the making and using stinted forms of prayer; since the petitions used by good men among the Jews, were not used as forms of prayer, but what they were led unto by the Spirit of God from common and constant experience to make use of; just as we may observe now, that good people in different parts, who use no form of prayer, nor have ever heard one another pray, do yet make use of the same petitions, and almost, if not altogether, in the self-same words; their wants, necessities, cases, and circumstances being the same; and these frequently returning, oblige to a repeated use of them, in the same words, or near unto them. And though forms of prayer might not be in use among the Jews in the times of Christ, yet it is easy to account for it, how Christ came to be acquainted with the petitions in general use with good men; since not only he is God omniscient, and knows all the prayers of his people, both in public and private; but, as man, must know what were used, by his attendance on public worship, and by the private communion he had with the saints and children of God. It must indeed be owned, that forms of prayer very early obtained among the Jews; and if not in Christ's time, yet in the times of his apostles. There is frequent mention (c) of the eighteen prayers in the times of Gamaliel, the master of the apostle Paul; and of a nineteenth composed by one of his disciples (d), Samuel the little; who is thought by some to be Saul himself, whilst he was a scholar of his; and which is directed against the heretics, or christians, as they were called by the Jews; and this easily accounts for, how the petitions of the ancient good men among the Jews came to be put with others into their forms of prayer, where we now find them. For that they should take these petitions from this directory of Christ's, is not reasonable to suppose, considering their implacable enmity against him. Moreover, supposing, but not granting, that these petitions which our Lord took,

(c) *Mishnah Beracot*, c. 4. §. 3. *T. Bab. Beracot*, fol. 28. 2. *T. Hieros. Taanot*, fol. 65. 3. *Maimon. Hilchot Tephilla*, c. 7. §. 7.

(d) *T. Bab. Beracot*, *ibid.* *Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla*, c. 2. §. 1, 2. *Ganz. Tzemach David*, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.

(b) *Pirke Eliezer*, c. 1. §. 1.

took, and put into this order, for the use and instruction of his disciples, had been used by good men as forms of prayer, it will not justify the use of forms by any authority of Christ, or as being agreeable to his will; since it is certain, that however these petitions were used by good men before, our Lord never designed they should be used as an exact, precise form of prayer by his disciples; seeing there are several variations in them as here delivered, from what they are as they stand in Matthew; whereas, had they been intended as a stinted form, they would have been expressed in the self-same words: and moreover, to approve of here, and there a petition, which for their matter are excellently good, and to approve of them all together as a form, are two different things: to which may be added, that though there is an agreement between the petitions, as used by the Jews, and those our Lord directs to; yet there are some variations and alterations much for the better, which destroy the form of them.

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

Shall have a neighbour, or acquaintance:

And shall go unto him at midnight] Which may seem a very unseasonable time, and which nothing but real distress, not knowing what otherwise to do, would put a man upon:

And say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves] It was usual with the Jews to borrow bread of one another, and certain rules are laid down, when, and on what condition, this is to be done; as for instance, on a sabbath-day (e), "A man may ask of his friend vessels of wine, and vessels of oil, only he must not say, Lend me; and so a woman, *מחברתה ככרות* "bread of her friend." Again, (f) "So said E. Uell, Let not a woman lend, *כר לחברתה* "bread to her friend," till she has fixed the price; lest wheat should be dearer, and they should be found coming into the practice of usury." For what was lent, could not be demanded again under thirty days (g).

6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

Or, "out of the way;" having lost his way, being benighted; and has rambled about for some time, and at length,

Is come to me] For lodging and entertainment:

And I have nothing to set before him] To refresh him with after such a fatigue, before he goes to bed, which was very requisite and proper.

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

The friend within doors, shall reply to him that is without at his door, in the street:

Trouble me not] By knocking at the door, and importuning to rise and lend loaves; whereby his rest would be disturbed, and trouble given him:

The door is now shut] Being very late at night, and which could not be opened without noise and inconvenience:

And my children are with me in bed] Sleeping, as the Perfic version adds; there were none, children or servants, up, to let him in:

I cannot rise] Without disturbing them:

And give thee] The loaves desired.

8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

This is the accommodation of the parable; to these words are premised, in the Vulgate Latin version, the following, "if he continue knocking: though he will not rise and give him, because he is a friend;" though mere friendship will not influence and engage him to rise from his bed, at such an unseasonable time, and fulfil the request of his friend;

Yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth] As he asks for, or more, if necessary. The design of this parable, is the same with that of the widow and the unjust judge, in chapter xviii. which is to shew the force of importunity, where friendship, as here, and the fear of God, and regard of men, which were wanting there, have no influence; and so to encourage to constancy and perseverance in prayer, with earnestness; taking no denial at the hand of God, but still continuing to make pressing instances.

9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

This is said by Christ, to encourage to prayer, and importunity in it; that if any one asks of God, in the name of Christ, and in faith, whether it be bread for the body, or food for the soul; or any blessing whatever, whether temporal or spiritual, it shall be given; not according to their deserts, but

(e) Mifn. Sabbat, c. 23. §. 1.

(f) Mifn. Bava Metzta,

c. 5. §. 9. (g) T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 3. 2. Jarchi in T.

Bab. Sabbat, fol. 148. r. Bartenora in Mifn. Sabbat, c. 23. §. 1.

but according to the riches of the grace of God; who is rich unto all that call upon him in sincerity and truth:

Seek, and ye shall find] Whether it be Christ, the pearl of great price, or God in Christ; or particularly, pardoning grace and mercy through Christ, or the knowledge of divine things; and both grace here, and glory hereafter, as men seek for hidden treasure; such shall not lose their labour, but shall enjoy all these valuable things, and whatever they are by prayer, and in the use of other means, seeking after:

Knock, and it shall be opened unto you] The door of mercy with God; the door of fellowship with Christ; the door of the Gospel, and the mysteries of it, and of the Gospel-dispensation and church-state, into which is admission to all that seek; and the door of heaven, into which there is entrance by the blood of Jesus: the several phrases denote prayer, the continuance of it, and importunity in it; see the note on *Matt. vii. 7.*

10 For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

Some indeed *ask and receive not, because they ask amiss*, James iv. 3. who either apply to a wrong person; or ask in a wrong manner, or from wrong principles, or with wrong ends in view: but when a man is right in the object of prayer, and in the matter and manner of prayer, and in the end he proposes to himself, let him be what he will, of whatsoever nation, or ever so mean a person, he has the petitions which he asks, either immediately, or, at least, he may be assured he shall have them in God's due time:

And he that seeketh, findeth] Whoever not only prays, but makes use of means, as attendance on other ordinances, and is diligent in the use of them, sooner or later finds his account herein, and what his soul seeks for:

And to him that knocketh, it shall be opened] Not only who prays heartily, and seeks diligently, but who is importunate, and will have no denial; continues knocking; though there may be some time a seeming delay, yet the door will not always be shut to him; after much knocking it will be opened; see the note on *Matt. vii. 8.*

11 If a son shall ask bread of any you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

Our Lord illustrates and confirms what he had said before by an instance common among men: the relation between a father and a son is natural, and it is very near; and it is usual for a son, when

hungry, and at the proper times of meals, to ask bread of his father: and when he does,

Will he give him a stone?] Should he do so, he would shew that his heart was as hard, or harder than the stone he gives:

Or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?] And endeavour to deceive him by the likeness of the one to the other, especially some sort of fish, which would poison, or sting him, but not refresh and nourish him: such inhuman, brutish parents, are not surely to be found; see the notes on *Matt. vii. 9, 10.*

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

Of scorpions there are three sorts; some are terrestrial, or land scorpions, scorpions of the earth, a kind of serpents, very venomous and mischievous, to whom the wicked Jews are compared, *Ezek. ii. 6.* and the locusts in *Rev. ix. 3, 5.* Others are airy, or flying scorpions, a sort of fowl; and others are sea scorpions, of the fish kind: it is not easy to say which of them is here meant. There is an herb which is called, עקרבין (*h*) "the scorpion": its leaves are like unto a scorpion, as the Jewish commentators say (*i*). This is observed with the same view as the former. By it may be meant here, either the fish that is so called, since a fish is mentioned before; or rather, the land scorpion, which is of the serpent kind; this brings forth little worms, in the form of eggs, as (*k*) Pliny says: and it is said, that a scorpion put into an empty egg-shell, has been used to be given to persons whose death has been desired; which it bursting from, at once strikes and kills: but what father would do so to a child!

13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

See the note on *Matt. vii. 11.*

How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?] Instead of the *Holy Spirit* here, the Vulgate Latin version reads, "good Spirit," and so two copies of Beza's; and the Ethiopic version, "the good gift of the Holy Spirit;" and doubtless intends the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, in distinction from, and as preferable to the good things given by earthly parents to their children.

14 ¶ And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil

(*h*) Misa. Erubin, c. 2, §. 6.

(*i*) Maimon. & Bartenora

in *Ibid.*

(*k*) Lib. 11, c. 25.

devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered.

At a certain time, either the same that is recorded in *Matt.* ix. 32. or in *Matt.* xii. 22. for both of them were attended with the same effect upon the people, and with the same calumny of the Pharisees, mentioned here;

And it was dumb] The Ethiopic version reads, "deaf and dumb;" that is, the devil, which possessed the man, made him both deaf and dumb; if the same as in *Matthew* xii. 22. he was blind, as well as dumb:

And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out] Of the man possessed by him, by the command of Christ:

The dumb spake] As other men did, and as he had done before; the cause being removed, the effect ceased:

And the people wondered] At the power of Christ, and concluded that he must be the Messiah, the Son of David.

15 But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils.

The Pharisees, *Matt.* ix. 34. and chap. xii. 24. who could not bear that he should be thought to be the Messiah, and therefore put an ill construction on the miracle:

He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils] In several copies he is called *Beelzebub*, and in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions; which last adds these words, *And he answered and said, How can Satan cast out Satan?* See the note on *Matt.* xii. 20.

16 And others tempting him, sought of him a sign from heaven.

Others of the scribes and Pharisees, or Sadducees: *Sought of him a sign from heaven*] See the notes on *Matt.* xii. 38. and chapter xvi. 1.

17 But he knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself, is brought to desolation: and a house divided against a house, falleth.

Being God omniscient,

Said unto them] The following parables, as they are called in *Mark* iii. 23. or proverbial expressions, very pertinent to the purpose, and sufficient to set aside the base calumnies of the Pharisees:

Every kingdom divided against itself, is brought to desolation] In process of time, division will end in destruction; and as it does in the kingdoms of the

world, of which there have been fatal instances, so it would in the kingdom of Satan, was there in it a division, which the calumny of the Pharisees supposes:

And a house divided against a house, falleth] The Perfic version renders it, "a house divided from the foundation, falls;" the sense is, A family, in which one part is opposed to the other, issues in the ruin of both; see the notes on *Matt.* xii. 25. and on *Mark* iii. 24, 25.

18 If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub.

This is the accommodation of the above parables, or proverbial sentences; suggesting, that Satan must be against himself, if what the Pharisees said was true; and consequently, his kingdom and government could not long subsist:

Because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub] Which is all one as to say, that Satan is divided against himself, which is not reasonable to suppose; see the notes on *Matt.* xii. 26. and on *Mark* iii. 26.

19 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges.

Which is what the Pharisees charged him with; in the Greek copies, and so in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, it is read, *by Beelzebub*, and so in the preceding verses; see the note on *Matthew* x. 25.

By whom do your sons cast them out?] By whose help? or in whose name? For the Jews pretended to cast out devils, and to heal those that were possessed with them; which they did sometimes, by making use of the names of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and sometimes of the name of Solomon: Josephus (1) speaks of many in his time who had this power of healing; and "he himself saw one Eleazar, in the presence of Vespasian, his children, officers, and soldiers, cure many that were possessed of devils: and his method was, by putting a ring to the nose of the possessed, under the seal of which was a root directed to by Solomon, and thereby brought out the unclean spirit; and as soon as the man was healed, he adjured the devil never to return more; at which time he made mention of the name of Solomon, and rehearsed the incantments written by him: the said Eleazar, to give a specimen of the efficacy of his art, set a cup full of water upon the ground, and commanded the devil when he went out of the man, to

(1) Antiqu. Jud. l. 8. c. 2.

“turn it over, as a sign that he had left the man, “and the devil immediately obeyed his order.” Now if these sons of theirs cast out devils, which they would not say were done by the help of the devil, or in his name, why should they ascribe the ejection of devils by Christ to a diabolical assistance?

[*Therefore shall they be your judges*] Or “judges against you,” as the Arabic version; or “shall reprove you,” as the Ethiopic, convict and condemn you; see the note on *Matt. xii. 27.*

20 But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

The power of God, referring to *Exodus viii. 19.* and so the Cabalistic Jews (*m*) explain it, “The finger is one of the five in the hand, and is that finger which works by the power of Elohim.” It is the same with the Spirit of God; see the note on *Matt. xii. 28.* which is often called the hand of the Lord, *Ezek. i. 3.* and chap. *iii. 22.* and *xxxvii. 1.* and *xl. 1.*

21 When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:

By the strong man, is meant the devil; see the note on *Matt. xii. 29.* and who may be said to be armed, both with his own temptations, which are as fiery darts, and which are thrown by him thick and fast, suddenly and swiftly, privily, and with great art and cunning, and with great strength, and are very injurious; and also with the sins and lusts of men, which are armour of unrighteousness, and which Satan turns upon them, and makes use of against them, to their great detriment; and who

[*Keepeth his palace*] Which is the corrupt heart of an unregenerate man, where he dwells as a king, has his throne, keeps his court, and has his courtiers and attendants, the lusts of the flesh, and the desires of the will, and the carnal affections; and which, as filthy a palace as it is, is perfectly agreeable to his nature; and this is kept by a guard of devils, and worldly lusts, till its strongholds are demolished by the Gospel, and Christ the king of glory enters in; till such time,

[*His goods are in peace*] There is no concern in such an heart about sin, no uneasiness on that account, no sense of danger, nor inquiry after salvation; no dread upon the mind at the curses of the law, nor fears of hell and damnation; but such a man lives in entire security, crying peace, peace, to himself.

22 But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from

him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

By whom is meant Christ, who is the mighty God, the Almighty; and appears to be so, in the creation of all things, in upholding them by the word of his power, in the government of the world, and the works of providence, in the redemption of his people from sin, Satan, and the law, and in the conversion of them by the efficacy of his grace, and in the preservation of them by his power; and who is manifestly stronger than Satan, not only by these instances, but by what follows:

[*Shall come upon him*] As he did in person, when he dispossessed him from the bodies of men; and does by his Spirit in conversion, when he enters into his palace, the heart of man, binds him, and looses men from him, and turns them from the power of Satan, to God; and sets up a throne of grace, where he himself dwells and reigns: so he comes upon him as an adversary, and often at an unawares; and always with great power and strength, and succeeds: Satan came upon Christ in the wilderness, in the garden, and on the cross, and attacked him, but without success; whence it is clear, that Christ is stronger than he:

[*And overcame him*] He overcame him in the wilderness, and obliged him to retreat; and on the cross, when he obtained a compleat victory over him, destroyed him, his principalities and powers, and all his works, and led him captive; and in conversion, so as to deliver his people from him, that were led captive by him, as that he can never regain his dominion over them more; and though he is suffered to tempt them, he cannot destroy them; and the saints shall overcome him at last, and have him bruised under their feet: and at the same time,

[*He taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted*] As his temptations, which he himself repelled in the wilderness, and wrenched out of his hands, and made them useless; and he gives power to his people to resist them, and succours them under them, and delivers them out of them; and also the sins of men, which he took away on the cross, when he bore them, and the punishment of them there: and in conversion, he greatly weakens the power of sin, and takes away the dominion of it; and though the being of it is not removed, hence Satan has something to work upon, yet its power is so far gone, that neither that nor Satan can destroy such who are truly called by the grace of God:

[*And divideth his spoils*] He spoils his house, the heart of man, from being any longer a palace for him, and his goods, his mind and conscience, which

(*m*) R. Mosch in *Sepher Haschem*, apud *Cabal Denudata*, tom. I. par. 1. p. 146.

which are enlightened and awakened, and purged: or by his spoils are meant the souls of men; which are taken as a prey out of his hands, and become trophies of victorious grace.

23 He that is not with me, is against me: and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth.

Our Lord does not mean one, that was personally with him: for there might be some, and doubtless were many, who were not in person with him, and yet were not against him, but friends to him and to his interest; nor one that was not a professed disciple of his, or not a follower of him and his apostles; for there were some who called themselves John's disciples, and did not attend on Christ, and yet were not against him, but cast out devils in his name; and such an one perhaps was he that is made mention of in *Mark* ix. 38-40. on occasion of whom Christ there says some words, which may seem, at first view, not so well to accord with these: but such are intended, who acted a neutral part between him and the Pharisees; who could bear to hear them accuse him of casting out devils by the prince of devils, and be easy at it; and such persons are condemned, who can hear all manner of blasphemy against the Deity, Sonship, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, and express no indignation at it; these, as they cannot be said to be *with* Christ, may be truly ranked among those that are *against* him:

And he that gathereth not with me, scattereth] Whoever did not encourage persons to attend on the ministry of Christ, which was confirmed by such miracles the Pharisees spoke so reproachfully and contemptuously of, were reckoned by Christ as such who were the means of hindering persons gathering unto him, as well as those who menaced and excommunicated them for so doing. The allusion is either to the gathering of the sheep into the fold, and the scattering of them by the wolf; or to the gathering of the wheat, and binding it in sheaves, and bringing it home in harvest; and to the scattering of the wheat loose in the field, whereby it is lost, and comes to nothing; see the note on *Matt.* xii. 30.

24 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

That is, the devil, who is in, and works in the children of disobedience, whether under a profession of religion or not; whose hearts are unclean like himself, wherefore there he delights to dwell; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "the evil *daemon*;" who may be said to go *out* of a man

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in appearance, when he outwardly reforms and takes up a profession of religion.

He walketh through dry places] Or "a desert," as the Ethiopic version; to which the Gentile world is sometimes compared in the Old-Testament, *Isai.* xxxv. 1. and chap. xli. 18, 19. and xlii. 11. whither Satan might go, being disturbed in Judea, through the many dispossession by Christ; or rather, leaving for a while the scribes and Pharisees, who outwardly appeared righteous before men; he went to the Gentiles;

Seeking rest, and finding none] Being also made uneasy among them, through the preaching of the Gospel, which was sent unto them after Christ's resurrection; and not being able to keep his place in the hearts of men, nor do the mischief he was desirous of,

He saith, I will return unto my house, whence I came out] To the Jews again, who were blinded and filled with rage and enmity to the Gospel by him, and whom he instigated to persecute the apostles of Christ, and preachers of the word, wherever they came; see the notes on *Matt.* xii. 43, 44.

25 And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished.

In Matthew it is also said to be *empty*; and so it is read here in the Arabic version; and in the Ethiopic version, "empty of men:" but rather the sense is, that he found it empty of all goodness, notwithstanding all the sweeping and garnish of an outward reformation. The Persic version renders, "heated and prepared;" heated with wrath and fury against Christ and his Gospel, and so was prepared and fitted to be a proper habitation for Satan; and in such a case as this was the Jewish nation from the time of Christ's death to the destruction of Jerusalem; see the note on *Matt.* xii. 44.

26 Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first.

Or *demons*, as the Ethiopic version, whom he took to him as his comforts and companions, as the same version calls them.

More wicked than himself] For it seems there are degrees of wickedness among the devils, as well as among men:

And they enter in and dwell there] The unclean spirit, and the other seven: so seven devils were in Mary Magdalene, and a legion in a certain man; and indeed the evil heart of man is an habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit: here it may chiefly design the place and power which the devil had among the Jews before their destruction:

U And

And the last state of that man is worse than the first] The Persic version adds, "and more miserable," as was the case of the Jews, to which this parable refers; as appears by what is subjoined in Matthew, which manifestly applies it to them,

Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation] See the note on Matt. xii. 45.

27 ¶ And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.

That is, as Christ spake, or "had finished these sayings," as the Persic version expresses it, before related, in vindication of himself and his miracles, from the blasphemy of the scribes and Pharisees, to their entire confusion; and had delivered the above parable concerning the unclean spirit, which had a particular regard to them.

A certain woman of the company] Observing the miracle he had wrought, in casting out a devil, and being affected with his discourse, in which he so fully cleared himself, and so strongly confuted his enemies, and set them forth in so just a light:

Lift up her voice, and said to him] Aloud, in the hearing of all the people, and with great earnestness and fervour:

Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked] Whether this woman personally knew Mary, the mother of Christ, is not certain; it may be that she was now present, or at least not far off; and this woman hearing that she, with the brethren of Christ, were without, and desired to speak with him, might be the occasion of her uttering these words; see Matt. xii. 46. though they are said not so much in praise, and to the honour of Mary, as in commendation of Christ; from whom, and for the sake of bearing and suckling so great a person, she was denominated *blessed* as before, both by the angel and Elisabeth, Luke i. 28, 42. This was a form of blessing among the Jews: so it is said (n) of R. Joshua ben Chananiah, a disciple of R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, who lived about these times, אשר יולדו "blessed is he that bore him:" and they had also a form of cursing among them, much after the same manner, as ליש בייא דבן איינן "curled be the paps that suckled him (o)." The Jews, in their blasphemous rage against Christ, and all that belong to him, say of Mary, the daughter of Eli, by whom they seem to design the mother of our Lord, that she hangs in the shades by the fibres of her paps (p); but this woman had a different opinion of her.

28 But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

"Christ said to the woman," as the Persic version reads, as correcting her, though not denying it, nor reproving her for it, but improving upon it:

Yea rather, Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it] Intimating, that though his mother was happy in bearing and suckling such a son, yet it was a far greater happiness to hear the Word of God; meaning either himself, the eternal Logos, so as to embrace him, believe on him, and have him formed in the heart; or the Gospel preached by him, so as to understand it, receive it as the ingrafted word, and bring forth fruit, and act in obedience to it; observe it, and abide by it, and never relinquish it. This is a greater happiness than to be related to Christ in the flesh, though ever so nearly. The Ethiopic version reads, "that hear the word of God, and believe, and keep it;" for *faith comes by hearing*, and shews itself in doing. Barely to hear the word, and even give an assent to it, will be of little avail, unless what is heard and believed is put in practice.

29 ¶ And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet.

Upon this woman's lifting up her voice, and saying the things she did; or rather to see what sign he would give, which some had desired, y. 16.

He began to say, This is an evil generation] The Alexandrian copy, two copies of Beza's, and the Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions, read, "this generation is an evil generation;" and also it was an *adulterous* one, as is added in Matt. xii. 39.

They seek a sign] For they had asked one of him, y. 16.

And there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet] One like unto it; see the note on Matt. xii. 39.

30 For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation.

As he was by lying three days and three nights in the whale's belly, and then cast on shore alive; which sign, or miracle, was wrought to confirm his mission and message, and to engage the Ninevites to give credit to him, and repent, or they might assure themselves they would be utterly destroyed:

So shall also the Son of man be to this generation] By lying three days and three nights in the heart of

(n) Pirke Abot, c. 2. §. 8.

(o) T. Hieros. Celaim, fol. 27. 2. Bereshit Rabba, §. 5. fol. 5. 1.

(p) T. Hieros. Chagiga, fol. 77. 4. & Sanhedrim, fol. 23. 3.

the earth, and then rising again from the dead the third day; and which should be done to confirm the truth of his Messiahship, and to declare him to be *the Son of God with power*, and to engage persons to believe in him; and to assure that wicked generation, that in case they remained, after such a sign, impenitent and unbelieving, *wrath would come upon them to the uttermost*; see *Matt. xii. 40.*

31 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

That is, the queen of Sheba, which was a country of Arabia, which lay south of Judea; of whom it is said, that she

Shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them] The sense is, that at the last day, when all shall rise from the dead, both Jews and Gentiles, this heathen queen shall rise, together with the men of that present generation among the Jews, stand in judgment with them, and against them; and that her conduct would be brought as an evidence against them, and be improved as an aggravation of their condemnation:

For she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon is here] The difference between them, and what aggravates the case is, that she was a Gentile that knew not God; they were Jews, his professing people; she came from afar, they were near, upon the spot, where Christ was; he was preaching in their streets, temple, and synagogues; she came to hear only natural or moral wisdom, but they might have heard spiritual and heavenly wisdom, with which eternal happiness is connected: she came to hear only a mere man, but they might have heard him who is the Wisdom of God, and the only wise God, and our Saviour; see the note on *Matt. xii. 42.*

32 The men of Nineve shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

Luke changes the order of these instances, Matthew mentions this before the instance of the queen of Sheba; but Luke puts it last: this circumstance is not material, and the design of it is the same with the former:

For they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and,

behold, a greater than Jonas is here] What in this case will aggravate the condemnation of the Jews in the day of judgment, is, that these men were heathens, *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel*, and *strangers to the covenants of promise*, and were not used to have prophets sent to them; and yet as soon as Jonas, a mere man, came to them, and preached but one sermon among them, they repented of their sins, and turned from them: whereas the Jews, who had a better notion of religion, and who, though they had the Son of God himself among them, who preached to them, and that many sermons, and whose ministry was confirmed by miracles, and had afterwards his apostles for a course of years, yet remained impenitent and unbelieving; see the note on *Matt. xii. 41.*

33 No man when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.

These words are often repeated by Christ on different occasions, see *Matt. v. 15. Luke viii. 16.* and the notes there; and here seem to design the free, open, and clear ministry of Christ, who excelled Solomon in wisdom, and Jonas in powerful preaching. It being as a candle, which, when lighted, no man putteth in a secret place; as under a bed, *Mark iv. 21.* where it cannot be seen, and its light be of any use:

Neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light] Intimating, that Christ and his disciples did not preach in corners, or in private houses, and secret places; but in the streets of the city, and in the temples and synagogues, the public places of worship: and therefore the Jews were the more inexcusable, that they did not attend to the ministry of the word; and this would be their condemnation, that *light was come among them*, and they preferred darkness to it, *John iii. 19.*

34 The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.

The Vulgate Latin and all the Eastern versions read, "the light of thy body is thine eye." The sense is, that as the eye gives light to the body, and the several members of it, by which they are guided and directed; so the understanding is the light of the soul, and the guide to all the powers and faculties of it:

Therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light] As when the eye is free from vicious humours, and its sight is clear, the whole

body reaps the advantage of it, and is perfectly illuminated by it; so, when the eye of the understanding is opened and enlightened by the Spirit of God, into the truths of the Gospel, and a single regard is had unto them, and to the glory of Christ in them, the whole soul is filled with light, joy, and comfort:

But when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.] As when the eye of the body is attended with any bad humours that hinder the sight, all the members of it are in darkness; so, when the understanding is darkened through the blindness and ignorance there is in men with respect to Gospel-truths, all the powers and faculties of the soul are in a very miserable and uncomfortable condition. The 35th and 36th verses are not in Beza's most ancient copy.

35 Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

By attending to the light of the Gospel, shining in the ministration of it, and do not neglect and despise it:

That the light which is in thee be not darkness.] Left being given up to a judicial blindness and hardness of heart, not only the light of nature, which the Jews had in common with the Gentiles, but even that notional light and knowledge of divine things, which they had by being favoured with an external revelation, the writings of the Old-Testament, should be lost.

36 If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.

That is, "if the whole soul," as the Ethiopic version reads, be full of Gospel-light, through the illuminating influences of the blessed Spirit accompanying the word:

Having no part dark.] Every power and faculty of the soul being affected with it, and influenced by it, though, as yet, the light and knowledge of evangelical things is not perfect in any:

The whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.] The whole soul shall be as full of light and joy, which the Gospel always brings with it, as a room is full of light, when a candle is lighted, and shines brightly, and burns clearly in it.

37 ¶ And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat.

Spake either the above words, or others at another time:

A certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him.] As one of the same sect had before, in chap. vii. 36. and who either was better affected to Christ than the generality of them were; or had a design upon him to get him into company with others, in private, and ensnare him if they could, and overcome him, who was an overmatch for them before the people; among whom they feared, should they go on thus publicly to attack him, their credit and reputation would sink, and be lost.

And he went in, and sat down to meat.] Whatever were the intentions of the Pharisee, Christ, who was always affable and free with all sorts of men, readily accepted of the invitation, and at once went along with him to his house; and dinner being ready, and on the table, he immediately sat down without any ceremony.

38 And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.

When he saw that Christ laid himself down on one of the couches and began to eat:

He marvelled.] That so great a prophet as he was, and a man of so much religion and holiness, should shew no regard to a common custom with them, and which was one of the traditions of their elders, and which they put upon a level with the commands of God. The Vulgate Latin version, and so Beza's most ancient copy, and another Exemplar, read, "he began to say, thinking (or judging) within himself:" he was moved at it, as the Perfic version renders it; he was filled with astonishment and indignation,

That he had not first washed before dinner.] Especially since he had been in a croud of people, &c. 29. for the Pharisees not only washed their hands, by immersing them up to the elbow before eating; but when they had been at market, or among any large number of people, or had reason to think they had, or feared they had touched any unclean person or thing, they immersed themselves all over in water; and which is the sense of the word βαπτίζομαι, here used; see the notes on Mark vii. 2—4.

39 And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

"Jesus said," as the Syriac and Perfic versions read; "the Lord Jesus," as the Ethiopic.

Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter.] Being very tenacious of the traditions of the elders, concerning the washing of cups and pots, which had been of late years brought in among

among them, and therefore the word *now* is used see the notes on *Matt.* xxiii. 25. and *Mark* vii. 4.

But your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness] Meaning, either their souls, which were full of all manner of sin, the cleansing and purity of which they had no concern about, whilst they were very strict and curious in washing their bodies, their cups and platters; or rather, the vessels which were filled with meat and drink got by extortion, rapine, and oppression; see *Matt.* xxiii. 25.

40 *Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without, make that which is within also?*

That is, he that made clean that which is without, or the outside of the cup and platter;

Make that which is within also?] Does not he make the inside clean likewise? Who ever washes a cup or platter, but washes and makes clean the inside as well as the outside? And so ye, who are so very careful to have your cups and platters clean, should be as careful what you put in them, that they are clean also; not only that they are clean according to the law, in a ceremonial sense, but in a moral sense, that they are honestly and lawfully got. The word, *עשה*, rendered, *made* and *make*, answers to the Hebrew word, *עשה* which sometimes signifies to beautify and adorn, and to cleanse, and remove away filth; as by paring nails, and washing the feet: so in *Deut.* xxi. 12. it is said of a captive-woman that a man takes into his house for his wife, among other things, *עשה* "she shall make her nails;" that is, *pare* them, as we render it, and remove the filth from them. Again, in *2 Sam.* xix. 24. it is said of Mephibosheth, that from the day king David departed, he had not, *עשה* "made his feet;" that is, as the Targum renders it, *עשה לו* "he had" "not washed his feet;" and so other Jewish interpreters understand it, either of his having not washed his feet, much less his whole body (*q*), or of not having pared his nails (*r*); and so the Vulgate Latin renders it, that he came to meet the king "with unwashed feet;" which may serve to illustrate and confirm the sense before given: though interpreters generally understand this of God; as the maker of the soul, as well as of the body; and therefore the purity of the former should be regarded, as well as that of the latter.

41 But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.

The phrase *עושה*, is variously rendered, and

(q) R. David Kimchi & Rabbenu Isaiah in loc. Vid. Jarchi in ib.
(r) R. Levi ben Gershom in ibid.

so furnishes out various senses: the Syriac version renders it, "give that which is," which is yours; or "which is given to you," as the Persian version, and agrees with ours, *such things as ye have*; and which carries in it but a very odd sense; for none can give of that which they have not. The Vulgate Latin version reads, "that which is over and "above;" superfluous substance, and which may be easily spared, without hurting a man or his family: others, "as much as you can;" according to a man's ability, and as God has prospered him in the world. The Ethiopic version renders it, "that which is necessary;" which the necessities of the poor call for, and is right and proper to give them: and the Arabic version, very foreign from the sense of the phrase, reads, "before every thing;" above all things give alms. But the true sense of it is contained in the literal version of it, "things "that are within;" that is, that are within the cup and the platter; give the meat and drink to the poor, your platters and cups are full of, gotten by injustice and oppression. Some read it not imperatively, *give*, but indicatively, *ye do give*; you oppress and defraud men, devour widows houses, and fill your own with the spoils of others; and then give out of their cups and platters drink to the thirsty, and meat to the hungry, to make atonement for your avarice and extortion:

And, behold, all things are clean unto you] That is, according to their own opinion, who fancied that almsdeeds justified them in the sight of God, cleansed them from their sins, delivered them from hell, and gave them a title to eternal life; see the note on *Matt.* vi. 1. for it can never be thought to be our Lord's meaning in earnest, that either their persons, or what they had, should be pure and clean unto them, by giving a part of their ill-gotten goods to the poor; but he speaks their sense, in an ironical way. From this opinion of theirs it is, that the Hebrew word, *טהור* which signifies "to be clean," is used by them for giving alms: so it is said (*s*), that "R. Jonathan and Resh "Lekish went down to bathe themselves in the "baths of Tiberias; and a certain poor man met "them, and said unto them, *ויתן בי* "give me "alms." They said unto him, When we come "back we will, *ויתן בך* "give thee alms." And so the Mahometans call alms by the same name, because they imagine that they cleanse their other substance from pollution, and their souls from avarice.

42 But wo unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and

(s) Vaj kts Rabba, §. 34. fol. 174. 2. Vid. fol. 173. 3, 4. & 174. 4.

and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

Though these words, with several other passages in this chapter, are much alike with those in *Matt.* xxiii. yet it is clear that they were spoken at different times, these in the house of a Pharisee, and they in the temple at Jerusalem:

For ye tithe mint and rue] See the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 23. the *Perfic* version here reads, "mint and anise," as there; and the *Ethiopic* version only *byssop*:

And all manner of herbs] Or, every herb; that is, all sorts of herbs that grow in the garden, and were not common to all;

And pass over judgment and the love of God] By judgment may be meant justice, or doing that which is right between man and man, both publicly and privately; which was greatly neglected by these extortioners and unjust men: and by the love of God may be intended, both love to God, which shews itself in the observance of the first table of the law, and love to the neighbour, which God requires, and regards the second table:

These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone] See the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 23.

43 Wo unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.

And also the uppermost rooms at feasts, *Matthew* xxiii. 6.

And greetings in the markets] See the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 6, 7.

44 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them.

As they are all along called by *Matthew*; though only here by *Luke*. The *Vulgate Latin* only reads, "wo unto you," leaving out all the rest: but the whole is retained in all the *Oriental* versions:

For ye are as graves which appear not] Being covered with grass; or, "which were not marked," as the *Ethiopic* version renders it; that is, were not whited or covered with lime, as some were, that they might be seen at a distance, and be known what they were; that so men might avoid going near them, and prevent their being defiled with them; see the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 27.

And the men that walk over them are not aware of them] And so are defiled by them. *Christ* compares the Pharisees, because of their hypocrisy,

and secret iniquity, both to whited sepulchres, and to those that were not; to those that were, because, like them, they looked beautiful without, and righteous in the sight of men, and yet were inwardly full of all manner of pollution and sin; and to those that were not, because they did not appear to be what they were, and men were deceived by them; and, under specious pretences to religion and holiness, were by their corrupt doctrines and practices unawares drawn into the commission of sin. Regard may not only be had to graves covered with grass, or not marked with lime, by which they might be known; but also to what the Jews call, קבר החורום "the grave of the abyss (t); a grave that is not known, no more than if it was in the bottomless pit: so uncleanness by touching a dead body, which a man is not conscious of, is called "the uncleanness of the abyss," or an unknown one (u).

45 Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also.

Or scribes, as the *Syriac* and *Perfic* versions read; and so the *Ethiopic* version calls him, "a scribe of the city:" the scribes and lawyers were the same sort of persons, who were interpreters of the law, and equally tenacious of the traditions of the elders *Christ* had referred to, as the Pharisees; and in general were Pharisees; though some of them might be of the sect of the Sadducees. This man observing that *Christ*, in his last words, joined the scribes and Pharisees together, and charged them both with hypocrisy, and pronounced a wo upon them, was very uneasy at it:

And said unto him, Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also] Us lawyers, or scribes also; both by mentioning their names, and accusing the Pharisees of the same things, which they must be conscious to themselves they were equally guilty of; so that if the one were criminal, the others were also. The *Ethiopic* version reads, by way of interrogation, "what thou sayest, does it not injure us?"

46 And he said, Wo unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.

Christ was so far from calling back what he had said or suggested, that he repeats and confirms it, and more particularly names them, and enlarges on their evil practices:

(t) *Mishn. Parah*, c. 3. §. 2. *Maimon. Hileh. Parah*, c. 3. §. 2.
(u) *Maimon*, in *Mishn. Nazir*, c. 9. §. 2. & *Pesach*, c. 7. §. 7.

For ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.] See the note on *Matt. xxiii. 4.*

47 Wo unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.

Meaning particularly the lawyers or scribes, together with the Pharisees, and even the whole body of the people, who in general were of the cast and complection here described:

For ye build the sepulchres of the prophets.] See the note on *Matt. xxiii. 29.*

And your fathers killed them.] The prophets; or "whom your fathers killed," as read the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions; the one put them to death, and the other erected stately monuments over them, or adorned them; and yet both had the same malignant spirit against the faithful servants and messengers of God; and which shewed their great hypocrisy.

48 Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres.

Or, ye bear witness, and ye allow; that is, they both witnessed that their fathers killed the prophets, and they consented to what they did, and approved of their actions:

For they indeed killed them.] It must be owned, and not their sons:

And ye build their sepulchres.] Which was a bearing and keeping up a testimony against them, and a continuing a remembrance of their crimes; and which looked as though they approved of them, or otherwise they should have been content to have the prophets lie buried in silence, and not erected stately monuments over them, which seemed to be raised more for the honour of those that put them to death, than of the prophets themselves. Or, whereas they did this under specious pretences of disliking their fathers sins, which yet secretly they loved, and were of the same wicked disposition against the ministers of the word, and which they would quickly shew; this discovered their hypocrisy, and confirmed the character Christ had before given of them; for it follows,

49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute:

The Syriac version only reads *wisdom*; by which seems to be meant not the perfection of God's wisdom; rather Christ is intended, who, as God, is the essential wisdom of God; and, as man and mediator, has the spirit of wisdom resting on him,

and the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hid in him; since this is said by Christ, *Matt. xxiii. 34.* though the words here seem to be the words of the Evangelist relating what Christ had said (*). Some have thought, that some book, under the name of *The wisdom of God*, is here cited, which had in it the following words, "I will send them prophets and apostles;" which, in Matthew, are called *prophets, wise men, and scribes*; and by whom are meant the apostles of Christ, and the ministers of the Gospel. The Persic version reads, "lo, I send to you," as in *Matt. xxiii. 34.*

And some of them they shall slay and persecute.] Some of them they shall put to death, and others they shall persecute from one place to another; see the note on *Matt. xxiii. 34.*

50 That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation;

The same with all the righteous blood, or the blood of all the righteous men, in Matt. xxiii. 35.

Which was shed from the foundation of the world.] For there were prophets from the beginning, which prophesied of Christ, *Luke i. 70.* and whose blood was shed very early: for Abel, the son of the first man, and who was the first whose blood was shed, was not only a *righteous man*, but a *prophet*; for by the sacrifice which he offered up, he gave a prophetic hint of the sacrifice of Christ, in that he spoke beforehand of it, as, *being dead, he yet speaks*: and now the Lord was about to send apostolical prophets, whom the Jews would slay, and he would suffer them to slay, that so the blood of all the former ones,

May be required of this generation.] And they be punished for it: just as in Babylon will be found, when God makes inquisition for blood, as he sooner or later always does, *the blood of the prophets and saints*, and of all that were slain upon earth, ever since Rome papal has been in power, *Rev. xviii. 24.*

51 From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.

Called *righteous Abel*, as in *Matt. xxiii. 35.* and so read the Arabic version here, and two manuscripts in the Bodleian library, and three of Stephens's copies; the Persic version renders it, "innocent Abel:" he is mentioned because he was

(*) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 94. 1. Vid. Targum in Eccl. x. 8. & in Lams. i. 1. & ii. 20.

the first man that was slain, and he was slain because of his righteousness.

Unto the blood of Zacharias] In the Cambridge copy of Beza's, it is added, *the son of Barachias*, as in *Matt. xxiii. 35.* and so the Arabic version, *the son of Barasiah*; who he was, see the note on *Matt. xxiii. 35.*

Which perished between the altar and the temple] Or "the house;" that is, the holy place: and the Ethiopic version renders it, "the holy house;" here he died, being slain by the Jews; see the note, as before.

Verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation] As it was at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem.

52 Wo unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye enter not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

The lawyers are particularly addressed again in distinction from the Pharisees, though much the same things are said to them both in *Matt. xxiii. 13.*

For ye have taken away the key of knowledge] Of the scriptures, of the law, and the prophets, and the true interpretation of them, and especially of such places as refer to the Messiah and the Gospel-dispensation, called *the kingdom of heaven*, *Matt. xxiii. 13.* they had not only arrogated the knowledge of these to themselves, setting up for the only interpreters of the sacred writings; but they had took away from the people the true knowledge and sense of them, by their false glosses upon them, so that they were *destroyed for lack of knowledge*: and hence came that famine of hearing the word, which they say (*y*) should be before the coming of the king Messiah, and now was. The Syriac and Arabic versions read, "the keys of knowledge;" and the Ethiopic version, "the key of righteousness." The Jews sometimes speak of "the keys of the law;" and represent the oral law as the root and key of the written law (*z*): but, alas! it was by the oral law, or the traditions of the elders, that they took away the key, or obscured the true sense of the written law. Some think, that here is an allusion to the custom of delivering a key to any one, when he was ordained or promoted to the dignity of a doctor: it is said of R. Samuel (*a*), that "When he died they put, *מפתח* his key, "and his writing-book into his coffin, because he "was not worthy of a son" to succeed him:

Ye entered not in yourselves] Into the kingdom of heaven, the Gospel-dispensation, neither receiving its doctrines, nor submitting to its ordinances:

(*y*) Targum in Ruth. i. 1.

(*a*) Vid. Cameron, in loc.

(*z*) Zohar in Exod. fol. 46. 1.

And them that were entering in ye hindered] By reproaching the miracles and ministry of Christ; by threatenings and excommunications; see the note on *Matt. xxiii. 13.*

53 And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things:

As he denounced the above woes upon them, charging them with the above crimes, and threatening them with divine vengeance:

The scribes and Pharisees began to urge him vehemently] To fall upon him with their tongues, and express great rage, wrath, and virulence against him:

And to provoke him to speak of many things] They put questions to him, and urged him to answer them, and did all they could to irritate him to say things that they could improve against him, to draw words out of his mouth, and then wrest and pervert them.

54 Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

Wanting to ensnare and entangle him, watching his words, observing what he said, and laying hold thereon:

And seeking to catch something out of his mouth] Like beasts of prey, or hunters, that were watching for their prey; or lay in ambush, diligently looking out, and greedily catching at every thing they thought for their purpose:

That they might accuse him] Either of heresy or sedition, to the Jewish sanhedrim, or the Roman governor.

CHAP. XII.

In this chapter Christ warns his disciples against the leaven of the Pharisees, *χ. 1—3.* Telleth them who they ought to fear, and who not, *χ. 4, 5.* Exhorteth them to trust on God's providence, and to confess his name: deborteth against blaspheming the Holy Ghost, *χ. 6—12.* Biddeith them beware of covetousness, and illustrates the caution by a parable of a rich man suddenly cut off by death in the midst of his worldly projects and hopes, *χ. 13—21.* Exhorteth them by the examples of ravens and lilies, to seek first the kingdom of God, *χ. 22—32.* Stirs them up to charity, and watchfulness for their Master's coming, *χ. 33—40.* He describeth the actions and reward of a faithful, and the actions and punishment of an unfaithful servant, *χ. 41—48.* Telleth them he came to send fire on earth, *χ. 49—53.* Exhorteth to reconciliation with our enemies, *χ. 54—59.*

IN the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trod one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

While Christ was discoursing with the Pharisees, and they were using him in the vilest manner, throwing out their invectives against him, in order to draw off the people from him:

When there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people] There were myriads of them, as in the original text, and a *myriad* is ten thousand; the meaning is, that there were several thousands of them:

Insomuch that they trod one upon another] Striving to get near to Christ, either to see his person, or to hear his discourses; and particularly, what he would say to the Pharisees, who had fallen upon him in so violent a manner:

He began to say unto his disciples first of all] He directed his discourse, not to the Pharisees, nor to the multitude, but to his disciples in the first place; at least, chiefly to them; for whom he had a special regard, who were his dear friends, and were to be the preachers of his Gospel every where; and therefore it was proper that they should be aware of the dissembling arts of the scribes and Pharisees, and have their minds fortified against approaching dangers, persecutions, and death itself: the last phrase, *first of all*, is omitted in the Vulgate Latin version; and by all the Oriental versions, it is joined to the next clause, and reads thus, "especially, or before all things."

Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy] Expressed both in their doctrines, and in their lives; which carried a great shew of piety and holiness; but it was in appearance only: very aptly is hypocrisy in doctrine and manners, compared to *leaven*; which at first is small and little, but gradually increases and spreads itself, and lies hid and covered, and is not easily discerned, nor its influence and effects observed; but in time, it infects and corrupts the whole of mens principles and practices, and puffs and swells them up with a vain opinion of themselves: and when our Lord bids his disciples beware of it, his meaning not only is, that they take heed that they were not infected with it themselves, but also that they were not imposed upon by the specious pretences of these artful and designing men.

2 For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.

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No sin, be it ever so secret or privately done; as nothing is more covered than hypocrisy, but what shall be detected sooner or later; if not in this world, which is often the case, yet at the last judgment, and in the world to come:

Neither bid, that shall not be known] For how careful soever men may be to hide their vices from others, they are known to God; who will bring every thing into judgment, and make manifest the secrets of all hearts. These were general sentences, which were used by Christ at different times, upon different occasions, and applied to particular cases; see the note on *Matt. x. 26*.

3 Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.

In the most private manner, to one another:

Shall be heard in the light] Which makes all things manifest, *the day shall declare it*:

And that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets] Whispering to persons in their bed-chambers, and places of the most secret retirement:

Shall be proclaimed upon the housetops] Declared in the most public manner: in *Matt. x. 27*. these words are so expressed, as to carry in them such a sense as this; that what was told the disciples by Christ, in the most private place and way, should be published by them in the most free and open manner; see the note there.

4 And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.

Friends whom he dearly loved, and had taken into the greatest intimacy and familiarity; making known to them whatever he had heard from his Father; giving them the best instructions, the most faithful and friendly advice, and proper precautions; all which, and more, shewed them to be his friends, and for whom he after laid down his life:

Be not afraid of them that kill the body] Though he would have them *beware* of the Pharisees, he would not have them be *afraid* of them; he would have them know them, and avoid their hypocrisy, and guard against it; but not fear them, or the worst they could do unto them, which was to *kill the body*; and that they had no need to be afraid of, since at death, their souls would be immediately happy, in the enjoyment and vision of God; and their bodies would sleep in Jesus, and be raised in the resurrection morn, and be united to their souls, and be both for ever blessed.

X

And

And after that have no more that they can do] They have nothing more to kill, or which they can put to pain or misery; the soul is out of their reach, is an immortal spirit, and cannot be hurt or destroyed by them.

5 But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

I will be your monitor, and direct you to the proper object of fear and reverence, and whom you should be careful not to displease or offend:

Fear him, which after he hath killed] "Your body," as the Perfic version adds; hath taken away the life of it, by separating soul and body asunder, by sending one disease or another, or death in one shape or another:

Hath power to cast into hell] "Your soul," as the above version also adds; yea, to destroy both body and soul in hell, as in *Matt. x. 28.* see the note there:

Yea, I say unto you, Fear him] And none else; not with a servile, but with a filial fear.

6 Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?

As two were sold for one farthing, *Matt. x. 29.* see the note there; so in buying and selling, where more money is laid out, things are bought cheaper; the Perfic version reads, "for two barley corns;"

And not one of them is forgotten before God] A single sparrow, a bird of little value and worth, is taken notice and care of by him; it has its life from him, and is provided for with food by him, and is under his protection; nor does he ever forget it, nor can any thing be done to it, without his permission; it cannot be struck, so as to cause it to fall on the ground, or be taken in a snare, or be killed in any shape, without the knowledge of God: his providence reaches to the minutest creatures and things, and much more then to rational creatures, to men; and still more to his dear children, ministers, and apostles.

7 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

Not only their persons had passed under the hands of him that telleth them, who is the palmist, or "wonderful numberer," as in the margin of *Daniel viii. 13.* and not only the several members of their bodies, or the more substantial parts of them, were written in the book of his

purposes, according to which they were fashioned in time; but the more minute parts, and less to be regarded, were all told over, and kept in account; even the very hairs of their head, and not one of them could fall to the ground, any more than a sparrow; or be plucked off by men, without the knowledge and will of God; so careful is the providence of God of all his people:

Fear not, therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows] For if the hairs of their heads are as much regarded as sparrows, their persons and their lives must be of more account than an infinite number of them, nor are they to be mentioned with them.

8 Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God.

The same as in *Matt. x. 32.*

Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God] Only instead of *I*, he here calls himself the Son of man; and instead of *before my Father which is in heaven*, here it is, *before the angels of God*; who will accompany Christ when he comes to judgment, and will be present, when he shall acknowledge his true followers as the blessed of his Father, the chosen of God, his redeemed and sanctified ones; and reject others before his Father, and the whole universe of rational beings: it is said in the Targum on *Gen. i. 15*: "When the children of Israel do the will of their King, he by his Word (the *Logos*) praises them in the family of the holy angels." This Christ, the eternal Word, will do at the great day.

9 But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God:

That is, that continues to deny Christ, and lives and dies a denier of him; for otherwise it is possible, for a person to deny Jesus to be the Son of God or the Messiah, and afterwards confess him; as a Pagan, or Jew; and, through temptation, a real Christian may be left for a while, in one shape or another, to deny him and his truths, and afterwards truly repent, and at last be saved, as Peter: but they that deny Christ publicly, and persist in it, *shall be denied before the angels of God]* They will be denied by Christ, as not belonging to him; they will be denied admission into heaven; they will be covered with shame and confusion publicly; they will be sent into everlasting burnings, and be for ever tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels.

10 And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him:

him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven.

These words, though introduced by Luke among the sayings of Christ, recorded in *Matt. x.* yet were said by Christ on occasion of the Pharisees ascribing his works to diabolical influence and assistance, in *Matt. xii. 32.* see the note there.

But unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost] As the Pharisees did, by charging the miracles of Christ with being done by the help of the devil, when they were wrought by the finger of the Spirit:

[It shall not be forgiven] The Ethiopic version adds, at the close of this verse, as in Matthew, *neither in this world, nor in that which is to come.*

11 And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say:

The synagogues of the Jews, to be examined and scourged by the rulers of them:

And unto magistrates, and powers] Heathen ones; the Perfic version reads, "princes and kings;" and the Ethiopic version, "princes, kings, and judges;" see *Matt. x. 18.*

Take ye no thought how or what ye shall answer, or what ye shall say] Be not anxiously concerned, neither about the manner, nor the matter of your answer, apology, and defence: in the first part of this clause, the Syriac, Perfic, and Ethiopic versions, only read, *how*; and the Arabic version only, *what*; see the note on *Matt. x. 19.*

12 For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

Shall give both words and matter:

In the same hour] Instantly, immediately:

What ye ought to say] What will be proper to be said, for the honour of Christ, the defence of the Gospel, and the confusion of your enemies; see the note on *Matt. x. 20.*

13 ¶ And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

Not one of the disciples of Christ, but one of the multitude, or crowd, about him, *y. i.*

Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me] The first-born, according to the law, in *Deut. xxi. 17.* had a double portion; but the elder brother here, it seems, was for keeping all, and would not divide any part to his younger brother; wherefore he applies to Christ, to interpose his authority, which he imagined would have

great weight with his brother, who might be a hearer of Christ, and a favourer of him: or however, such was the fame of Christ, and such credit he obtained by his ministry and miracles, that he concluded a word from him would go a great way with his brother, to engage him to make a right and proper division, as he ought; and especially, if he looked upon him, as the King Messiah the Jews expected, he might take this to be part of his work and office, to settle such civil affairs as these. We often read in the Jewish writings, of brethren dividing their substance, lest by their parents; so it is said (a), "האחין שחלקו" "brethren that divide," (a field,) give two corners (to the poor;) if they return and become partners, "they give but one." Where there were but two brethren, as here, the one was called בְּכוֹר "the first-born;" and the other, פְּטוּר "simple," having no title or character: and concerning dividing inheritances, there are various rules (b): but it would be tedious to transcribe all the rules relating to such cases.

14 And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?

Or, "friend," as the Ethiopic version renders it; that is, "Jesus said to him," as the Syriac, Perfic, and Ethiopic versions express it:

Who made me a judge or a divider over you?] Referring to the words of one of the Hebrews to Moses, when he interposed in a difference, *Exod. ii. 14.* suggesting, that the same might be retorted on him, should he engage in such an affair. The reason why Christ avoided meddling with it, was not because it is unlawful for Christians to concern themselves in arbitrations about civil affairs, and in making up family differences, which is very commendable; but lest by such a step he should give occasion to them to conclude he was a temporal king: whereas his kingdom was not of this world, and his business lay not in civil affairs, and the management of them; but in spiritual concerns, in preaching the Gospel, and doing good to the souls of men; wherefore this was out of his province: and besides, it was a matter of covetousness, either in this person, or his brother, or both; which Christ takes an occasion from hence to expose, agreeable to his office; to which may be added, that this man seems to have disturbed Christ in his public work, and was of such a worldly spirit, as to prefer the care of his secular affairs, to the hearing of the word, and the welfare of his immortal soul.

15 And

(a) Mish. Peah, c. 3. §. 5.

(b) Vid. Maimon. Hileh. Ntcha'ot, c. 2. §. 1, 7, & c. 10. §. 1—4.

15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

Said either to the two brethren, or to his disciples, as the Syriac and Persic versions read, or to the whole company:

Take heed, and beware of covetousness] Of "all covetousness," as read the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, and some copies; that is, of all sorts of covetousness, and every degree of it, which of all vices is to be avoided and guarded against, being the root of all evil; and as the Persic version renders it, is "worse than all evil," and leads into it:

For a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth] Of "flocks and beasts," as the Persic version renders it: a man's natural life cannot be prolonged by all the good things of the world, he is possessed of; they cannot prevent diseases nor death; nor do the comfort and happiness of life lie in these things; which are either not enjoyed by them, but kept for the hurt of the owners of them, or are intemperately used, or some way or other imbibed to them, so that they have no peace nor pleasure in them: and a man's spiritual life is neither helped nor advantaged hereby, and much less is eternal life to be acquired by any of these things; which a man may have, and be lost for ever, as the following parable shews.

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully.

He supposed the following case, and made use of it by way of illustration of what he had said:

The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully] Who, notwithstanding his riches, was but a fool, as the sequel shews: rich men are not always wise in things natural and civil; and very few of them are spiritually wise, or wise in spiritual things, in things which relate to the welfare of their souls; but however, this man was very prosperous in his worldly affairs, as a man of a small share of common sense may be, and wicked men often are: the word translated *ground*, signifies a *region*, or *country*, which expresses more largely the riches of this man, that he had not a common and ordinary farm, but a whole country as it were; at least a very large part of one, and all this fruitful.

17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

And foolish thoughts they were; he did not think of God, or that there was one, and much less that he was the author of all his outward prosperity and plenty; and was still further from thinking of returning thanks to God for it; or of asking counsel of him, what he should do with it; but he consults himself only, and thought only within and for himself; and not at all of his poor neighbours, or for the good of others; nor did he think even of his own soul, but altogether about his worldly substance:

Saying, What shall I do?] He does not say what shall I do for God? for his interest, service, and glory? for the poor, the hungry, and thirsty, and naked? or for my own soul, that that may be eternally saved? But what shall I do with my goods?

Because I have no room where to bestow my fruits] He had gathered in his harvest, and filled his barns as full as they could hold, so that they had no room for more; and yet had still an abundance to lay up, and about which he was anxiously concerned; not thinking of the empty bellies, barns, and houses of the poor, where he might have stowed much.

18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

This was the resolution he came to, and which he took up, without consulting God, or asking leave of him:

I will pull down my barns, and build greater] Which was not a very wise one; for he might have let his present barns have stood, and have added new ones to them:

And there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods] He ascribes the increase of his substance to himself, and reckons them his own acquisitions, and entirely owing to his diligence and industry; and therefore calls them *my fruits*, and *my goods*; and accounts them his good things, his only good things; as worldly men place all good and happiness in outward enjoyments, having no notion of spiritual and eternal good things: he determines to lay up all in his barns, for his own use and service, and nothing for God and his interest, nor any thing for the poor and their relief.

19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

Say to himself, see *Psal.* xlix. 18. or to his sensual appetite, which he sought to indulge and gratify, for he was wholly a sensual and carnal man:

Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years] He foolishly promises himself a long life, when no man

man can boast of *to-morrow*, or *knows what a day will bring forth*; or can assure himself he shall live a day, an hour, or moment longer: and he also depended upon the safety of his goods, thus laid up; whereas his barns might be consumed by fire at once, or his goods be devoured by vermin, or plundered by thieves, and by various ways taken out of his hands; for riches are uncertain things, and often *make themselves wings and fly away*:

Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry] Spend thy life in ease, luxury, and mirth; put away the evil day far from thee; never trouble thyself about a future state; *to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant*; and as thou hast enough to make thyself happy, let nothing disturb thee; give a loose to all sensual pleasures, and carnal joys. This is the language of an epicure among the Jews, and is forbidden to be used, especially on fast-days; for so it is said (c), "Let not a man say, I will go to my house, and I will eat and drink, (and say) *שלום עליך נפשי* "peace to thee, O my soul;" if he does so, of him the scripture says, *Ishai. xii. 13, 14. Behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine; let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die—Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you, till ye die, &c.*"

20 But God said unto him, *Thou fool*, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?

God determined within himself he should die that night; for the time of a man's death, as well as of his birth, is fixed by God; or he sent the messenger of death, some disease or another, the language of which was, immediate death, or death in a very short time; or he spoke to his conscience, and impressed it on his mind, that he should die that night, and not live:

Thou fool] As he appeared to be throughout the whole of his conduct:

This night thy soul shall be required of thee] Which is of God's immediate formation, is immortal, of more worth than a world, and its loss is irreparable; and for which a man is accountable to God, the Father of spirits; and which he requires at a man's hands at death, which is here designed; and shows, that a man has no power over it to retain it, but must give it up when it is called for, even that very instant,

This night] Which may refer to the time when covetous persons are employing their thoughts about their worldly goods, or when epi-

cures and sensual persons, are indulging themselves in luxury and intemperance; and to the condition the soul is in, being in the *night* and in *darkness*, and knows not whither it is going; and denotes its immediate remove, and the suddenness of divine wrath and vengeance. The Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions, agreeable to the Greek text, read the words, "this night do they require thy soul of thee;" or "out of thy body," as the Perfic version reads: the Ethiopic version renders it, "they shall take thy soul from thee;" that is, the evil angels, the devils, having a commission from God, shall demand thy soul; and as soon as ever it is separated from the body, shall seize upon it, and carry it to hell; just as the good angels carry the souls of the saints to heaven, *Luke xvi. 22*.

Then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?] Not his own, for he can carry nothing with him; nor does he know whose they will be, whether the person's he designed them for, or some others whom he abhorred, and would, if possible, have prevented their enjoyment of them; and should he have them for whom he intended them, he does not know how he will turn out, whether a wise man or a fool, or what use he will make of them.

21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

This is the accommodation of the parable. Just such a fool is he, and this will be the end of him, who employs all his thoughts, and spends all his time, in amassing to himself worldly riches and wealth, in laying up treasures on earth for himself, for futurity; and makes no use of his earthly substance for the good of others; nor shews any concern for spiritual and eternal riches; but places all his hope, trust, and confidence, in uncertain riches:

And is not rich towards God] Or *in God*, as the Syriac and Arabic versions read; in things pertaining to God, in spiritual things, in faith, and in good works; and is not concerned to lay up a treasure in heaven; to have an interest in durable riches and righteousness: whereas one that is rich towards God, acknowledges that he receives all his riches *from God*, as the Ethiopic version reads; he gives up all into the hands of God, depends upon his providence for the increase, security, and continuance of it; and uses it to his honour and glory, and for the good of his interest; and is chiefly concerned for the riches of grace and glory; and enjoys much of God, and places all his riches in him: such a man is a wise man; but the reverse of this is the fool in the parable.

22 ¶ And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life,

life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

Having finished the parable which he spake to the whole audience in common, he directed himself to his disciples, who were poor, and apt to be over anxious about their living in the world:

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat] The Ethiopic version adds, *and what ye shall drink*; and so a manuscript in Gonvill and Caius college in Cambridge, which seems to be transcribed from *Matthew* vi. 25. Life is very near and dear to a man; all that a man has he will give for it; and it is his duty to be careful to preserve it, and to make use of means for the support of it; but then, as he should not be dainty about the food he eats, and should refuse no good creature of God, but receive it with thanksgiving; so he should not distress himself for fear of wanting bread, nor distrust the promises of God, and a supply from him; but should cast all his care upon the Lord, who daily cares for him:

Neither for the body, what ye shall put on] It is highly proper and necessary that the body should be clothed, partly for decency, and partly to secure it from the inclemency of the weather; but then persons should not be difficult and over-nice about what they wear, nor be distressed, fearing they should be clothed with rags; but should trust in the Lord, who gives food and raiment, and all things richly to enjoy.

23 The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.

What in *Matthew* is put by way of question, is here strongly affirmed; and these words contain a reason or argument to dissuade from an anxious, distressing thought and care about the necessities, conveniences, and comforts of life: and all the Oriental versions read, "for, or seeing" *the life is more than meat*; that is, it is more excellent and valuable in its own nature, being that for the support of which meat is provided; and seeing God is the author and giver of life, it need not be doubted but he will give meat for the maintenance and continuance of it, so long as it is his pleasure it should subsist.

And the body is more than raiment] It is of more worth than the richest clothing that can be had; the finest piece of embroidery is not comparable to the curious workmanship of the body, *Psalms* cxxxix. 15; and he that has so curiously wrought that, will not fail to provide suitable and proper clothing for it; and therefore there ought to be no anxiety on this account; see the note on *Matt.* vi. 25.

24 Consider the ravens: for they neither

sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?

According to the Jews (d) there are three sorts of ravens, the black raven, the raven of the valley which is said to be white, and the raven whose head is like a dove. In *Matthew*, the fowls of the air in general are mentioned, as they are here in the Cambridge copy of Beza's; but in others, the ravens in particular, they being fowls of very little worth, and disregarded by men, and odious to them, as well as unclean by the law; and yet these are taken care of by God. The Arabic version reads, "the young ravens;" and these are they which are said to cry unto God, who provides food for them, and gives it to them, *Job* xxxviii. 41. *Psalms* cxlvii. 9.

For they neither sow nor reap, which neither have storehouse nor barn] And yet they are provided for; and therefore, why should men, and especially God's own people, distrust his providence over them, when they both sow and reap, have the seed-time and harvest in the appointed seasons; they cast their seed into the earth, and it springs up and brings forth much fruit, which they reap when ripe, and gather into their barns and storehouses, from whence they are supplied till another season returns; wherefore they have no reason to distress themselves, seeing, though this is not the case of ravens, yet God feedeth them; their young ones, as the above places shew. Jerom says (e), that it is affirmed by some philosophers, that they live upon dew. The Jews (f) have a notion, that the old ravens being cruel to their young, and hating them, the Lord has pity on them, and prepares flies, or worms for them, which arise out of their dung, and enter into their mouths, and they eat them. One of their commentators says (g), when the young ones are hatched they are white, and the old ones leave them, not taking them for their own, and therefore bring them no food, and then they cry to God; and this is mentioned by some Christian writers, but not sufficiently confirmed: and another of them observes (h), that the philosophers of the Gentiles say, that the ravens leave their young as soon as they are hatched; but what Aristotle (i), Pliny (k), and Ælianus (l) affirm of these creatures, is, that as soon as they are able to fly they turn them out of their nests, and

(d) T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 63. 1.

(e) Comment. in Job

xxxviii. 41. & in *Psal.* cxlvii. 9.

(f) Jarchi in Job xxxviii.

41. & in *Psal.* cxlvii. 9. & Kimchi in *ibid.*

(g) Kimchi *ibid.* Vid. T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 49. 2. & Gloss. in *ibid.*

(h) Aben Ezra in *Psal.* cxlvii. 9.

(i) Hist. Animal. l. 9. c. 31.

(k) Nat. Hist. l. 10. c. 12.

(l) De Animal. Natura, l. 2. c. 49.

and even drive them out of the country where they are; when, as it is said in Job, they *wander for lack of meat*, and cry unto God, who gives it to them: and since this is the case, and the providence of God is so much concerned for such worthless creatures, the people of God, and disciples of Christ, ought by no means to distrust it: for, as it follows,

How much more are ye better than the fowls?] Or *than these*, as the Vulgate Latin version reads; that is, than these ravens, or any other fowls whatever; see the note on *Matt. vi. 26*.

25 And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?

By thinking in an anxious and distressing manner, for food and raiment, in order to preserve and continue life,

Can add to his stature one cubit?] The Persic version reads, "to his stature and height;" as if this referred to the height of stature; whereas it seems rather to regard the age of a man, and the continuance of his life; see the note on *Matt. vi. 27*.

26 If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

As to make the smallest addition to a man's stature; or rather, to add one moment to his days:

Why take ye thought for the rest?] Which are much greater; as to preserve the body in its whole bulk, and all its parts, or for the feeding and clothing of it; or rather, for the continuation and preservation of life to any length of time; for if it cannot be, by all a man's care and solicitude, lengthened out one moment longer than is the pleasure of God, how should it be by such anxiety continued for months and years?

27 Consider the lilies how they grow; they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Some copies read, *the lilies of the field*, as in *Matt. vi. 28*. The Persic version renders the word, "the roses and lilies of the field;" and the Arabic version, "the flowers;" any flowers of the field; for what is afterwards said, is true of any of them, but particularly of the lilies: now, as the former instance of God's feeding the ravens is designed to remove all anxious and distressing thoughts about food for the body; this is mentioned to take off every thing of that kind with respect to clothing for it; wherefore, in Matthew, these words are premised to it, *and why take ye thought for raiment?* There will be no need of it, when it is considered how

the lilies, or tulips, or any other flowers, grow up out of the earth, and in what a fine beautiful dress they appear, without any care or labour of their own, and even without the care and management of a gardener; for flowers of the field are here meant:

They toil not, they spin not] They neither labour as men do, in sowing of flax, and dressing it, or in combing of wool, or in spinning of either:

And yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these] The Ethiopic version renders it, "in the whole time of his glory;" throughout his glorious reign, at any time; whenever upon any extraordinary occasion he was dressed out in the finest manner, yet even then a lily outdid him; its glory being natural to it, whereas his, at best, was but artificial, and an imitation of nature; see the note on *Matthew vi. 29*.

28 If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?

As lilies and tulips; for they are no other than grass, weak, frail, fading, short-lived flowers, which have all their gaiety and beauty from the great Creator of them:

Which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven] The grass is one day in the field, in all its verdure, glory, and beauty; and being cut down before evening, the next day it is withered, and dried, and made fit to put into an oven, or under a furnace, to heat them with:

How much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?] The Persic version renders the words, "how much more excellent are ye than that," *O ye of little faith?* They are more excellent in their nature, and of a longer duration, and are designed for greater ends and purposes; and therefore if God clothes the one in such a manner as he does, how much more will he not clothe the other? And such who are distrustful and diffident in this matter, may well be called men of *little faith*; see the note on *Matthew vi. 30*.

29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

That is, seek not in an anxious and distressing manner, with a tormenting and vexatious care; otherwise food is to be both asked of God every day, and to be sought for and after in the use of proper means:

Neither be ye of doubtful minds] Questioning and distrusting that ye shall have any thing to eat or drink: be not fickle, unstable, and inconstant, and

and wandering in your thoughts about these things, like the meteors in the air, which are carried about here and there; let not your minds be disturbed and distracted about them, or be anxiously solicitous for them; see the note on *Matt. vi. 31*.

30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

That is, the Gentiles, as in *Matt. vi. 32*, who are frequently, in the Jewish writings, called, in distinction from the Jews, אומות העולם "the nations of the world (*m*)."^(m) This is an argument used to dissuade from an immoderate and anxious concern for food and raiment, because it is heathenish, and therefore very unbecoming the disciples and followers of Christ: it need not be wondered at in those that know not God, and do not acknowledge his providence, and are strangers to his covenant and promises; but must be very unsuitable to the characters of such who know that *godliness has the promise of this life, and of that which is to come*:

And your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things] And therefore it is needless to be so anxious about them: the *Perfic* version reads, "all these things," and so some copies; that is, meat, drink, and clothing, all the necessities of life; see the note on *Matt. vi. 32*.

31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

The *Vulgate* Latin version adds, *first*, as also, and his righteousness, as in *Matt. vi. 33*, and the *Ethiopic* version reads, "seek his kingdom and righteousness;" meaning either the grace of God, which is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, *Rom. xiv. 17*, or the heavenly glory; unless the Gospel, and the dispensation of it, which is the Messiah's kingdom, and which was then just ushering in, should rather be intended.

And all these things shall be added unto you] Food and raiment, which are as much as can be enjoyed; and godliness with these, and contentment with them, is great gain; see the note on *Matt. vi. 33*.

32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

These words are particularly directed to the immediate apostles and disciples of Christ; but are true of all the saints in all ages of time; who are compared to a flock of sheep, being separated from the rest of the world in election, redemption, and effectual vocation; and being folded together in a

Gospel-church-state; and also for their patience, meekness, humility, and harmlessness: these are a little flock; few in number, when compared with the wicked of the world; and mean and despicable in the account of men; and little in their own eyes: these are subject to many fears; some relate to their outward state and condition, as that they shall want food and raiment, and not have the necessities of life; which seems to be in the first place here intended, as appears from the context: and some regard their spiritual and eternal estate, as lest they should have no interest in the love of God, and in the covenant, in the blessings and promises of his grace; lest they should not belong to Christ; or the good work of grace should not be begun in them; or that they should not persevere to the end, and should at last miscarry of eternal life and happiness: and these fears arise from a body of sin, from the temptations of Satan, the hidings of God's face, and the prevalence of unbelief: for they have no true reason for them: God is on their side, and will not leave nor forsake them, nor shall they want any good thing: Christ is their shepherd, and he has bought them with his own blood, and will lose none of them; and therefore they need not fear being taken care of both in soul and body, for time and eternity: and especially when what follows is considered;

For it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom] Not only the Gospel, and the knowledge of the mysteries of it; nor the Gospel-church-state, and a right to all its ordinances; nor only the kingdom of grace, which cannot be moved; but the kingdom of glory: and which is a gift unto them, not obtained by any deserts or works of theirs; nor is their right unto, and enjoyment of it depending upon any such thing: and it is their Father's gift, who is so by adopting grace, and through Christ Jesus their Lord; and which he gives according to his sovereign will and pleasure, and with a good will, delighting in them, and rejoicing over them to do them good, both here and hereafter: so that they may depend upon every good thing needful for them both in this world, and in the world to come; nor should they indulge anxious cares, or slavish fears.

33 ¶ Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

Since they had a kingdom bequeathed them by their heavenly Father, they should be so far from indulging an anxious care about food and raiment, that when there was a call in providence for it, and rather

(m) Vid. T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 28. 2. & 29. 1.

rather than the poor should go without a supply, it became them to sell their houses and lands, and whatever possessions they had, and relieve them; and so they did, not long after; for some of those who sold their estates, and brought the money to the apostles, *Acts* iv. 34, 35. might be now present; and the more readily and cheerfully do what they did, remembering these words of Christ:

Provide yourselves bags which wax not old] As do the bags of misers: their bag is, *אֶרֶץ נֶקֶב* "a bag pierced through," or that has a hole in it, which lets the money out as fast as it is put in, *Hag.* i. 6. and which the Targum renders by, *לִמְאִרָה* "for a curse;" as money hoarded up in bags by covetous persons generally is: Christ would have his followers put their money up in other bags; not in such which rot through age, or are worn out, and are full of holes through use; but into the hands and bellies of the poor, the fruit and reward of which will always abide;

A treasure in the heavens that faileth not] Whereas treasure on earth does, being either taken away from the possessors of it by various ways, or they from that:

Where no thief approacheth] Can come near to steal it away, which is often the case here on earth:

Neither moth corrupteth] As it does the best of garments wore by men: but the robes of glory and immortality can never be corrupted; see the note on *Matthew* vi. 20.

34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Whether in heaven, or in earth;

There will your heart be also] The heart is always set upon the treasure, and as is a man's treasure, such is his heart, that is set upon it; if his treasure is only here, and he has not the true riches, his heart is only earthly and carnal; but if his treasure is heavenly, his heart and conversation will be in heaven; see the note on *Matt.* vi. 21.

35 ¶ Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning;

Girt with the *girdle of truth*, *Eph.* vi. 14. keeping close to the doctrines of the Gospel, abiding faithfully by them, even unto death: the allusion is either to the eating of the first passover, *Exod.* xii. 11. or rather to servants, who, in those eastern countries, wore long garments; and therefore, when in business, used to gather them up, and gird them about them, that they might perform their service with greater strength, more ease, quicker dispatch, and less hindrance: the phrase denotes readiness for business:

And your lights burning] The Vulgate Latin version adds, "in your hands;" meaning torches,
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that were held in the hand: and may design either the scriptures of truth, which were to be a light or lamp unto them, guiding and directing them in the ministration of the Gospel; or the ministration of the Gospel; or the lamp of profession, which should be kept clear and bright, and good works, becoming them, that should so shine before men, that all may see them, and glorify God. The allusion is to persons waiting at a wedding in the night, with torches and flambeaus in their hands.

36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

Who either was at a wedding, or was the bridegroom himself; so be ye in a readiness, waiting for the coming of Christ, the bridegroom of the church:

When he will return from the wedding] The Syriac version renders it, "from the house of feasting;" from any entertainment, or from the marriage-feast, or rather the marriage itself, to the bride-chamber: so when Christ has, by the preaching of the Gospel, and the power of his grace, espoused all his elect, he will descend from heaven, and take them to himself; they shall then be called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb, and enter with him into the nuptial-chamber, and be for ever with him:

That when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately] And let him in without any delay, as soon as ever he comes to the door, and at the first knock; open it to him at once, having light, and being in a posture of readiness, and in constant expectation of him: so such who have believed in Christ, and have been faithful to his cause and interest, and have held fast the profession of their faith without wavering, when Christ shall either come and knock at their doors by death, or shall come to judgment, and sound the alarm of it, they shall be ready to obey the summons with the greatest cheerfulness, and meet him with the utmost pleasure.

37 Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, "their Lord;" the master of them, or the Lord Jesus Christ:

When he cometh shall find watching] For him, and not asleep. The Ethiopic version reads, "so doing,"
Y "and

"and watching;" girding up their loins, trimming their lamps, and waiting for their lord's coming: such servants are happy, they will appear to be in the favour of their master, who will take notice of them, and show some marks of respect to them; as Christ will to all his good and faithful servants, whenever he comes, whether at death, or at judgment; and who will be happy then, being found so doing, and found in him.

Verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself. Not that Christ shall really do this, or appear in the form of a servant; but that he shall readily, cheerfully, and at once, introduce his servants into his joy, and make them partakers of all the glories of the other world.

And make them to sit down to meat. At his table in his kingdom; see *Matt. viii. 11. Luke xxii. 30.*

And will come forth and serve them. With food, yea, will feed them himself, and lead them to fountains of living water, *Rev. vii. 17.* The Arabic version renders it, "he shall stand to minister unto them:" the phrase is expressive of the posture of a servant; who, as Dr Lightfoot observes, is *in walking*, and who goes round about the table, whilst others sit (*n*): some think there is an allusion in the words to a custom used at some feasts, particularly at the feasts in honour of Saturn, in which servants changed clothes with their masters, and sat at their tables, and their masters served them (*o*).

38 And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

Of the night, that is, after nine o'clock, or any time between nine and twelve; for the second watch was from nine o'clock till twelve; and this was coming early from an entertainment, or a wedding, which were commonly kept in the night, and late:

Or come in the third watch. Or after twelve o'clock, or any time between twelve and three; for the third watch was from twelve o'clock to three, which was late; see the note on *Matt. xiv. 25.* The Persic version reads, "in the second, or third part of the night;" and the Ethiopic version, "in the second or third hour of the night;"

And find them so. The Arabic version adds, *doing*; as above described, with their loins girt, lights burning, and they watching for their lord's coming.

Blessed are those servants. Since they shall be used and treated as before related.

39 And this know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

The Ethiopic version reads, "this only know;" only take notice of this one thing, and it may be of some use to direct you in your conduct how to behave during the absence of your lord, until the time he shall come again:

That if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come. That is, if the owner or master of the house, whose the goods in the house are, could by any means know what time of the night the thief would come to break into his house, in order to plunder it, and carry off his goods.

He would have watched. Either he himself in person, or he would have set a watch about his house, or in it:

And not have suffered his house to be broken through. Either the door to be broken up, or the wall to be dug through, but by a guard about it, or within it, would have prevented such a design. And so in like manner, could it be known in what time Christ would come, either to the destruction of Jerusalem, or at death, or to judgment, every thoughtful, prudent man that should know it, would be upon his guard, that he might not be surprised with it; and though the precise time could not be known, yet inasmuch as the thing itself is certain, it became all the servants of Christ to be watching for it; see the note on *Matthew xxiv. 43.*

40 Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

Not only habitually, but actually, in the exercise of grace, and the discharge of duty, with loins girt, and lights burning. This may be understood either of a readiness to meet the Lord in the way of his judgments, and particularly the destruction of Jerusalem, which was to be in a few years; or of a preparation for death, and the last judgment; which lies in the righteousness of Christ imputed, and his grace imparted: and to have a comfortable view of the one, and a gracious experience of the other, as they will engage to the performance of good works, to which such are ready; so they make meet for the coming of Christ, be it in what way, and whensoever it will: and the rather, a concern should be had for such a preparation, because of the following reason.

For the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not. In either of the above ways; see the note on *Matthew xxiv. 44.*

41 Then

(n) Jarchi in T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 77. 2.

(o) Vid. Laphu Saturnali. l. 1. c. 2. p. 6.

The Ethiopic version reads, "in the second or third hour of the night;"

41 ¶ Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

The Syriac, Perfic, and Ethiopic versions read, "our Lord:"

Speakest thou this parable] Of the master at the wedding, and his servants waiting for him, or of the housekeeper watching that his house be not broken up, or both,

Unto us, or unto all] Peter was in doubt whether the above discourse was peculiarly directed to them, the apostles, as containing special instructions to them in the discharge of their ministerial work; or whether it was designed for all his disciples and followers, both in the present age, and in time to come, to the end of the world.

42 And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* lord shall make ruler over his household, to give *them* their portion of meat in due season?

Christ does not directly, and in express words, answer to Peter's question, but suggests, that though he intended it as a caution to all his people, and in it spake to them all to be upon their watch and guard, *Mark* xiii. 37. yet that he had a special regard to them, his apostles, and succeeding ministers of the Gospel, whose characters, office, work, dignity, and honour, are here described. Such are *stewards* in Christ's family; they are entrusted with the stores and provisions of his house; and *faithfulness* and *wisdom* are requisite in them; the one, that they do not corrupt and adulterate the word of God, and mix it with human doctrines, but that they deliver it out pure and sincere as it is; and the other, that they may rightly divide it, and wisely distribute it:

Whom his lord shall make ruler over his household] Christ's *household*, or family, is his church, over which the ministers of the Gospel are appointed *rulers*, to govern the house according to the laws of Christ, and keep every thing in good decorum and order; and particularly their work, and which agrees to their character as stewards, is,

To give them their portion of meat in due season] In doing which they answer the character of faithful and wise stewards: they are *faithful* who give out the whole portion allotted, without adulterating it, or keeping back any part of it; and they are *wise*, who deliver it to them in proper time and season. The word translated *portion of meat*, is only used in this place, and is rendered in the Vulgate Latin version, "a measure of wheat;" but it may be applied to any food in general, and an allotment of it; and signifies such a portion as

was given to servants for one month, or rather every day; and may signify that portion of the word of God, and the interpretation of it, which is to be given forth every Lord's day to his people, suitable to their condition, cases, and circumstances. The Septuagint translators use the verb in *Genesis* xlvii. 12. who render the text thus, *And Joseph, 101000000, measured out to his father, and to his brethren, and to all the house of his father, wheat, or bread, according to their persons; that is, the number of them: to which passage there may be some reference here; at least it serves to illustrate this; see the note on Matt. xxiv. 45.*

43 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

Who is faithful and wise, rules well, and discharges his trust with integrity, and disposes of the provisions of the house, in his hands, with great discretion and prudence:

Whom his lord when he cometh] To take vengeance on the wicked Jews, or by death, or at judgment:

Shall find so doing] Behaving as a good ruler, and as a wise and faithful steward.

44 Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

This with Christ was a strong way of asserting the truth of any thing; and the sense is, you may assure yourselves of it, this will certainly be the happy case of such a servant:

That he will make him ruler over all that he hath] As Joseph was made by Pharaoh. Such an one shall reign with Christ on earth a thousand years, and then in heaven with him to all eternity, where he shall enjoy all things; see the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 47.

45 But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the men servants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

Not the same servant before spoken of as a wise and faithful steward, that gives to all in the family their portion of meat in due season, and shall be found so doing, and be made ruler over his master's goods; but another, who also, as he, is made by his lord ruler over his household, and is in a like post, and in the same office, but is an *evil servant*, as Matthew calls him, to distinguish him from the other; and so the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read here;

My lord delayeth his coming] Though a wicked servant, he calls Christ his Lord; but it is not saying Lord, Lord, that will be of any avail, but doing the will of God, by believing in Christ,

and obeying his commands: he had a notion of the coming of Christ, though he did not desire it; and because he tarried longer than was expected, supposed him to be slack concerning his promise; and began to think, and hope, and at length to believe, that he would not come at all; and therefore gave himself up to a wicked and licentious way of living:

And shall begin to beat the men servants and maidens] To persecute the ministers of the Gospel, and the true disciples of Christ, the undefiled virgins, that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes:

And to eat and drink, and to be drunken] To live a voluptuous and sensual life, to give himself up to intemperance and debauchery: and, generally speaking, as professors of religion, when they turn apostates, are the most violent persecutors of the saints, so such persecutors of Christ's faithful followers, are commonly drunkards and debauchees; see the notes on *Matt. xxiv. 48, 49.*

46 The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

For, not coming as was expected, he gives over looking, and concludes he will not come at all; in which he will find himself mistaken, for he will come in the very day which is appointed, though men know not of it, and do not look for it:

And at an hour when he is not aware] For as neither the day, nor hour of Christ's coming, are known to any man, it becomes men to look for it every day and hour, lest it come upon them unawares; as it will on such evil servants before described, with whom it will go ill, as follows:

And will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers] Whose portion is the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death, *Rev. xxi. 8.* and by these are meant, not only the heathens, who never heard of Christ; nor the Jews only, who disbelieved the Messiah, and rejected him when he came: but all Deists and Atheists, who deny revelation; even all unbelievers of, and scoffers at the coming of Christ, and who put away the evil day far from them; compare with this *Job xx. 29.* see the notes on *Matt. xxiv. 50, 51.*

47 And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

Not his secret, but his revealed will; the will of God, which lies in the declarations of his grace

and mercy in the Gospel, and in the commands and ordinances expressed in his word; and which are the good, perfect, and acceptable will of God; the knowledge of which is necessary, in order to practice: and where there is a spiritual and saving knowledge there will be practice; but there may be knowledge, where there is no practice, and which was the case here: Christ here distinguishes between wicked servants, some being knowing, and others ignorant: and accordingly the aggravations of their guilt are more or less:

And prepared not himself] So the Arabic and Ethiopic versions supply, but the Syriac version for him, that is, for his lord: but it may as well be read as in the Vulgate Latin, without any supplement,

And prepared not] He took no thought nor care about doing it: there is no preparation, readiness, nor disposition, in a natural man, to the will of God: no man is prepared, or ready to do it, but he that is regenerated, or is made a new creature; who has the laws of God written on his heart, and who has the Spirit of God put within him, to cause him to keep them; and who has faith in Christ, and strength from him to observe them: but there may be knowledge, where such a preparation is wanting; persons may know much, and profess to know more, and in works deny all, and be to every good work unfit, disobedient, and reprobate: this clause is left out in the Perfic version:

Neither did according to his will] The will of God is done aright, when what is done is done according to the command of God, in the strength of Christ, from love to him, in the exercise of faith on him, and with a view to his glory, and without any dependence on what is done; but there may be knowledge without any thing of this: the words, *neither did*, are wanting in the Syriac version: and such a man that hath knowledge without practice,

Shall be beaten with many stripes] Alluding to the law of the Jews, by which a wicked man was to be punished, by beating him with stripes, not exceeding forty, according to the nature of his fault, *Deut. xxv. 2, 3.* and here it signifies, that persons who have light and knowledge, and the means thereof, and act not according to them, shall be punished with the greatest severity, and endure the greatest degree of torment in hell; see *Matt. xi. 21—24.*

48 But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom

whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

His lord's will; either not having the means of knowing it, as the heathens; or through neglect of them, not attending to them, and making use of them, which is the case of many, where the Gospel-revelation is:

And did commit things worthy of stripes] Or punishment; as the Gentiles, by sinning against the law, and light of nature; and those who might have the advantage of a divine revelation, but neglected it: the Septuagint in *Deut. xxv. 2.* have the same phrase as here, *αξιὸν πλῆσιν*, "worthy of stripes."

Shall be beaten with few stripes] Their punishment shall be less, and it shall be more tolerable for them in the day of judgment, than for knowing professors. The Jews did not always inflict forty stripes, or forty fave one, upon delinquents; but according to their crimes, and as they were able to bear them, more or fewer (*p*). And elsewhere the rule is (*q*): "He that commits a sin, in which there are two negative (commands broken) if they pronounce but one sentence, he is beaten, and is free; but if not (that is, if more than one) he is beaten, and when he is healed, he is beaten again."

For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required] The more knowledge a man has, the more practice is expected from him; and the greater his gifts are, the more useful he ought to be, and diligent in the improvement of them:

And to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more] Not more than what was committed to him, but more than from him who has less committed to him; in proportion to what a man is entrusted with, the greater increase and improvement it is expected he should make.

49 ¶ I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?

Meaning either the Gospel, which is as fire, that gives both light and heat, warms the hearts of God's people, and causes them to burn within them; though very distressing and torturing to wicked men; so the word of God is compared to fire, in *Jer. xx. 9.* and *xxiii. 29.* Or else zeal for it, and which would be opposed with sharp contentions by others; or rather persecution for the sake of the Gospel, called sometimes the fiery trial; which tries men, as gold is tried in the fire, what they are, and what their principles and professions be: unless the Holy Ghost, and baptizing with him, and with fire, should be meant; since

Christ in the next verse speaks of the baptism of his sufferings, which that was to follow:

And what will I?] What shall I say concerning this fire? what shall I wish and pray for? what would be pleasing and agreeable to me? even this,

If it be already kindled] Or, *that it were already kindled*, or, *O that it were already kindled*; meaning either, that the Gospel was warmly preached by his disciples, and zealously defended by them, as it was after his death and resurrection; or that hot persecution was raised against it, which was now beginning, since the advantage of it would be far greater than the evil in it; or that the Holy Ghost was come down in cloven tongues, like as of fire.

50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?

Not water-baptism, for he had been baptized with that already; nor the baptism of the Spirit, which he had also received without measure; though the Ethiopic version reads it actively, "with which I shall baptize," referring doubtless to that; but the baptism of his sufferings is meant, which are compared to a baptism, because of the largeness and abundance of them; he was as it were immersed, or plunged into them; and which almost all interpreters observe on the text, and by which they confess the true import and primary signification of the word used: as in baptism, performed by immersion, the person is plunged into water, is covered with it, and continues a while under it, and then is raised out of it, and which being once done, is done no more; so the sufferings of Christ were so many and large, that he was as it were covered with them, and he continued under them for a time, and under the power of death and the grave; when being raised from thence, he dies no more, death hath no more dominion over him. This baptism he *had*, there was a necessity of his being baptized with it, on his Father's account; it was his will, his decree, and the command he enjoined him as Mediator; it was the portion he allotted him, and the cup he gave unto him: and on his own part, he obliged himself unto it, in the counsel and covenant of peace: for this purpose he came into this world, and had substituted himself in the room and stead of his people; and it was necessary on their part, for their sins could not be atoned for without sufferings, nor without the sufferings of Christ; moreover, the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament concerning them, made them necessary:

And how am I straitened until it be accomplished?] These words express both the trouble and distress Christ

(p) Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrim, c. 17. §. 2, 3.

(q) Mishn. Maccot, c. 3. §. 11.

Christ was in, at the apprehension of his sufferings, as man; which were like to the distress of persons closely besieged by an enemy; or rather of a woman, whose time of travail draws nigh, when she dreads it, and yet longs to have it over: and likewise they signify, his restless desire to have them accomplished; not that he desired that Judas should betray him, or the Jews crucify him, as these were sins of theirs; nor merely his sufferings as such; but that thereby the justice of God might be satisfied, the law might be fulfilled, and the salvation of his people be obtained: and this eager desire of his he had shewn in various instances, and did shew afterwards; as in his ready compliance with his Father's proposal in eternity; in his frequent appearances in human form before his incarnation; in sending one message after another, to give notice of his coming; in his willingness to be about his Father's business, as soon as possible; in rebuking Peter, when he would have dissuaded him from all thoughts of suffering; in going to Jerusalem of his own accord, in order to suffer there; in his earnest wish to eat the last passover with his disciples; in the joy that possessed him when Judas was gone out, in order to betray him; in stopping in the midst of his sermon, lest he should overrun, or outstep the time of meeting him in the garden, *John* xiv. 30, 31. in his going thither, and willingly surrendering himself up into the hands of his enemies; and in cheerfully laying down his life: all which arose, from the entire love he had for the persons he died for; and because it was his Father's will, and his glory was concerned herein, and his own glory also was advanced thereby; moreover, his death was the life of others, and the work required haste.

51 Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

To set up a temporal kingdom, in great pomp, and outward peace and tranquillity. Christ came to make peace with God for men, and to give the Gospel of peace, and spiritual and eternal peace to men; but not external peace, especially that which is not consistent with the preservation of truth:

I tell you, Nay] Whatever suppositions you have made, or whatever notions you have entertained, I solemnly affirm, and you may depend on it, I am not come into the world on any such account, as to establish outward peace among men:

But rather division] So he calls the Gospel, which in Matthew is styled *a sword*; and the Ethiopic version seems to have read both here, since it renders it, "but a sword, that I may divide:" the Gospel is *the sword of the Spirit, which divides*

asunder soul and Spirit, and separates a man from his former principles and practices; and sets men apart from one another, even the nearest relations, at the greatest distance; and is, through the sin of man, the occasion of great contention, discord, and division.

52 For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

Which are the five following, mentioned in the next verse; the father and the son, the mother and the daughter, and her daughter-in-law, or son's wife; for the mother and mother-in-law, are one and the same person, only standing in different relations; as a mother to her own daughter, and a mother-in-law to her son's wife, or to her husband's daughter by his first wife; though the former best answers to the word used: now from the time of Christ's saying these words, or quickly after this, immediately upon his baptism of sufferings, or soon after his death, when the Gospel should be preached more publicly and extensively, this should be the effect of it; that supposing a family consisting of the above number, they should be divided from one another, in the following manner:

Three against two, and two against three] Three that did not believe in Christ, against two that did believe in him; or two that did not believe, against three that did; or three that did, against two that did not; or two that did, against three that did not. The Ethiopic version reads, "two shall be separated from three, and one shall be separated from two."

53 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

Shall oppose him, differ with him, and be alienated from him, and so the other relations as follow; see the notes on *Matt.* x. 35, 36.

54 ¶ And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west; straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.

For what Christ had before said, was chiefly, if not solely, directed to his disciples; but now he turned himself to the innumerable multitude that were about him, and particularly addressed himself to the scribes and Pharisees that were among them:

When ye see a cloud rise out of the west] The watry vapours being attracted by the heat of the sun,

sun, out of the Mediterranean sea, which lies west of the land of Judea, and formed into a cloud, and drove by the wind :

Straightway ye say, There cometh a shower] As soon as it is seen, it is presently concluded and affirmed, that a very heavy shower will soon fall, it having been frequently observed so to do when this has been the case :

And so it is] For the most part, there commonly follows a large shower on such an appearance, and they were seldom mistaken in their conclusions.

55 *And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.*

From the hot countries of Egypt, Ethiopia, and Arabia, which lay south of Judea :

Ye say, There will be heat] Or hot sultry weather, scorching heat, which such a wind brings with it :

And it cometh to pass] Generally speaking, as is asserted.

56 *Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?*

Hypocrites is a word often used of the scribes and Pharisees, and which suggests, that there were such in company, to whom Christ more especially directs his discourse; and this may be the rather thought, since much the like things are said by him to the Pharisees, with the Sadducees, in *Matthew* xvi. 1—3. and the same appellation is given them there, as here :

Ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth] From the appearance of the sky they could tell how it would be with the earth, and the inhabitants of it, whether they should have dry or wet weather, heat or cold :

But how is it that ye do not discern this time?] That this is the time of the Messiah's coming, and that it is *the accepted time, and day of salvation*, if ye receive him, and believe in him; and a time of vengeance, if ye reject him? This might have been discerned by the prophecies of the Old Testament, which fix the characters of the Messiah, and the time of his coming; and describe the manners of the men of that generation in which he should come; and point out both their happiness and their ruin; as also by the doctrines they heard Christ preach, and especially by the miracles which were wrought by him, it might have been known he was come.

57 ¶ *Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?*

From their own observation, as in discerning the signs of the weather; in a rational way, by the light

of reason, and according to the dictates of their own consciences; by what they themselves saw and heard; by the signs and wonders which were done, they might have concluded, that now was the time of the Messiah's coming; and that he was come, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he: this was as easy by observation to be discerned, as the face of the sky was; even of themselves, without any hints or directions from others :

Judge ye not what is right?] Or *truth*, as the Syriac and Persic versions render it; concerning the present time, the coming of the Messiah, and the accomplishment of the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament in him: or why do ye not of yourselves judge what is fit and right to be done between man and man, without going to law? and that in cases which are plain and clear, the consequences of which may be as easily discerned, as what weather it will be by the signs in the heavens; to which sense the following words incline.

58 *When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, as thou art in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.*

With "the creditor," as the Persic version, and who is the prosecutor, that has commenced a suit of law against another, in order to obtain his right: for Christ is here speaking of a bad man, that will not pay his just debts, so that his creditor is obliged to prosecute him, and have him :

To the magistrate] Ruler, or prince; the *Nasi*, or prince of the sanhedrim, who sat as judge there :

As thou art in the way] Going along with the creditor, or prosecutor, to the court of judicature;

Give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him] The Persic version renders it, "give him the money;" and the Arabic version, "give what thou owest;" and the Syriac version, "give the gain;" or pay the interest; about which the dispute is, and so escape out of his hands; lest when the matter is brought into court, sentence should be given to pay both interest and principal, with all costs and charges; or however, make up matters with him, satisfy him in some way or other, before things are brought to an extremity :

Lest he hale thee to the judge] The same that is called the magistrate, or prince before, that sits chief upon the bench, hears and tries causes, and passes sentence :

And the judge deliver thee to the officer] Who upon hearing the matter in difference, and giving the cause against the defendant, and for the prosecutor,

cutor, delivers the debtor into the hands of a proper officer, in order to commit him to prison; the word rendered *officer*, signifies an exactor of debts, or fines; and was one that obliged such as were cast, to do what the judge appointed to be done: in the Septuagint on *Isaiah* iii. 12. it answers to an *oppressor*; and such men were wont to use rigour, to bring persons to the payment of their debts, or fines:

And the officer cast thee into prison] Which he had power to do, when committed into his hands by the judge, in case the sentence pronounced was not immediately complied with; see the note on *Matthew* v. 25.

59 I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite.

The Syriac version, before *I tell thee*, prefixes an *Amen*, or *verily*, for the sake of the stronger affirmation, which seems to be taken from *Matt.* v. 26.

Thou shalt not depart thence] Get out of prison: *Till thou hast paid the very last mite*] Of the sum in debate, which was what the Jews call a *prutah*; and that was the eighth part of an Italian farthing, and half a common farthing; see *Mark* xii. 42, and the note there; with this agrees what Maimonides says (*r*); that "When he that lends, requires what he has lent, though he is rich, and the borrower is distressed, and straitened for food, there is no mercy shewed him in judgment, but his debt is demanded of him, מרומת אחרונה עד "unto the last *prutah*, or mite."

CHAP. XIII.

In this chapter, by the example of the Galileans, and the eighteen men on whom the tower of Siloam fell, Christ exhorteth to repentance, §. 1—5. For which end he relates the similitude of the barren fig-tree, §. 6—9. He bealeth a woman on the sabbath-day which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, §. 10—13. He justifieth himself before the ruler of the synagogue, §. 14—17. Compareth the kingdom of heaven to mustard-seed and leaven, §. 18—22. Exhorteth to strive to enter in at the strait gate, §. 23—30. He is warned to depart because of Herod's design: he complaineth of their cruelty, and foretelleth their ruin, §. 31—35.

THERE were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

Among the innumerable multitude of people, chapter xii. 1. that were then hearing the above discourses and sayings of Christ;

Some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices] These Galileans, were very likely some of the followers of Judas Gaulonitis, or Judas of Galilee; see *Acts* v. 37. who endeavoured to draw off the Jews from the Roman government, and affirmed it was not lawful to give tribute to Cæsar; at which Pilate being enraged, sent a band of soldiers, and slew these his followers; who were come up to the feast of the passover, as they were offering their sacrifices in the temple, and so mixed their blood with the blood of the passover lambs: this being lately done, some of the company spoke of it to Christ; very likely some of the scribes and Pharisees, whom he had just now taxed as hypocrites; either to know his sense of Pilate's conduct, that should he condemn it as brutish and barbarous, they might accuse him to Pilate; or should he approve of it, might traduce him, and bring him into contempt among the people; or to know his sentiments concerning the persons slain, whether or no they were not very wicked persons; and whether this was not a judgment upon them, to be put to death in such a manner, and at such a time and place; and which sense seems to be confirmed by Christ's answer. Josephus (*a*) relating a slaughter of the Samaritans by Pilate, which bears some likeness to this, has led some, though without any just reason, to conclude, that these were Samaritans, who are here called Galileans. This history is neither related nor hinted at, by any other writer but Luke. The phrase of *mingling blood with blood*, is Jewish. It is said of one Trogianus the wicked (perhaps the Emperor Trajan) that "He slaughtered the Jews, ועורב דמן ברמן" and "mingled their blood with their blood;" and their "blood ran into the sea, unto Cyprus (*b*)."
The Jews (*c*) have a notion, that "In the age in which the Son of David comes, Galilee shall be destroyed." Here was a great slaughter of the Galileans now; see *Acts* v. 37. but there was a greater afterwards by the Romans: it may be that the Pharisees made mention of this case to Christ, to reproach him and his followers, who were called Galileans, as his disciples chiefly were.

2 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things?

He answered, neither approving, nor condemning Pilate's action; and though he allowed the Galileans to be sinners, which could not be denied, he does not bear hard upon them, but improves

(*a*) Antiqu. l. 18. c. 5.

Vid. Lightfoot Hor. in loc.

(*b*) T. Hieros. Succa, fol. 55. 2.

(*c*) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 97. 1.

(*r*) Hilchot Milvab, c. 1. §. 4.

proves the instance for the conviction of his hearers, and in order to shew them the necessity of repentance, and to bring them to it:

Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things?] Such a supposition they seem to have made, by their speaking to Christ concerning this matter; and concluded, from their violent and untimely deaths, that they had been notorious and uncommon sinners, and guilty of the most enormous crimes, which had brought upon them the just judgments of God: whereas this is not a rule of judging: oftentimes the best of men suffer exceedingly in this life; God's judgments are a great deep, and not to be fathomed by us; nor is it to be easily known, when any thing befalls persons in a way of judgment; there is nothing comes by chance, but every thing by the wise disposal of divine providence, to answer some end or another; nor are persons that are punished, either immediately by the hand of God, or by the civil magistrate, to be insulted, but rather to be pitied; besides, love and hatred, the characters and states of men, are not to be known by these effects in providence.

3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

No, they were not greater sinners than others of their neighbours, nor is that to be concluded from the bloody slaughter that was made of them; others might be much more deserving of such an end than they, who yet escaped it:

But, except ye repent] Of sin, and particularly of the disbelief of the Messiah:

Ye shall likewise perish] Or perish in like manner as these Galileans did: and so it came to pass in the destruction of Jerusalem, that great numbers of the unbelieving Jews, even three hundred thousand men, were destroyed at the feast of pass-over (d); and that for sedition, as these men very likely were.

4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

Eighteen men; the Perfic version reads, "those twelve;" but all copies, and other versions, agree in this number:

Upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them] There was a pool near Jerusalem, called the pool of Siloam, John ix. 7. near, or over which, was a tower built, which fell down and killed eighteen

men; very likely as they were purifying themselves in the pool, and so was a case very much like the other, and might be a very late one; and this Christ the rather observes, and puts them in mind of, that they might see that not Galileans only, whom they had in great contempt, but even inhabitants of Jerusalem, died violent deaths, and came to untimely ends; and yet, as not in the former case, so neither in this, was it to be concluded from hence that they were sinners of a greater size, or their state worse than that of other men:

Think ye that they were sinners] Or debtors; for as sins are called debts, Matt. vi. 12. so sinners are called debtors:

Above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?] There might be, and doubtless there were, as great, or greater sinners, in that holy city, and among such that made great pretensions to religion and holiness, than they were.

5 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

No: I affirm it, and you may depend upon it, they were not greater sinners than others; though such a melancholy accident befel them, not without the providence of God:

But, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish] Or perish in the same manner; that is, shall be buried under the ruins of the city and temple of Jerusalem, when one stone should not be left upon another; just as these eighteen men were buried under the ruins of the tower of Siloam, of which it was a pledge and emblem; and accordingly great numbers of them did perish in the temple, and were buried under the ruins of it (e).

6 ¶ He spake also this parable: A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.

That is, "Jesus spake," as the Perfic version expresses it, that which follows; and at the same time, and upon the above occasion; setting forth the patience of God towards the Jewish nation, their unfruitfulness, and the danger of their being destroyed, in case of non-amendment:

A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard] This was not at all contrary to the law in Deut. xxii. 9. *Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds*; for according to the Jewish canons (f), "The prohibition on account of divers seeds in a vineyard, concerned divers sorts of corn, as wheat, barley, &c.) and divers sorts of herbs only:

(d) Vid. Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 11. & l. 7. c. 17. Euseb. l. 3. c. 5.

(e) Joseph de Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 4.

(f) Maimon, Hilchot Celaim, c. 5. §. 6.

"only: but it was lawful to sow other sorts of seeds in a vineyard, and there is no need to say "other trees." And there are cases put, and instances given, which express, or suppose fig-trees, particularly, to have been planted in vineyards: for it is said (g), "If a man carries a vine over part of a tree for meat, he may sow seed under the other part of it.—It happened that R. Joshua went to R. Ishmael to Cephaz Aziz, and he shewed him a vine carried over, חמור מקצה "part of a fig-tree." Again, more than once it is said in a parabolical way (h), "This is like unto a king that has a paradise, or orchard planted, שורה של תאנים ושל גפנים "a row of fig-trees and of vines," and of pomegranates, "and of apples, &c." By the *certain man* may be meant, either God the Father, who is sometimes called an husbandman; or rather, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is truly man, as well as properly God; and by *his vineyard* may be meant the Jewish nation; see *Isaiah* v. 1, 2, 7. which were his own nation and people, from whence he sprung, and to whom he was particularly sent, and among whom he had a special property; and may also be applied to the church of God in any age or nation, which is often compared to a vineyard, consisting of persons separated from the world, and planted with various plants, some fruitful, pleasant, profitable, and valuable, and are Christ's by his Father's gift, and his own purchase. And by *the fig-tree* planted in it, may be principally meant the scribes and Pharisees, and the generality of the Jewish people; who were plants, but not of Christ's Father's planting, and therefore to be cut down, or rooted up: and may be accommodated to professors of religion; some of which are true and real, and may be compared to the fig-tree, because of its large and green leaves, expressive of their profession; and become fruitful, as they are, being filled with the fruits of the Spirit, of righteousness, and of grace; and because it puts forth its fruit before its leaves, as there should be the fruit of grace before a profession of faith is made. Others are only nominal professors; and are like a fig-tree, of which sort was this in the parable, that has large leaves, but no fruit; these make a large profession, but bring forth no fruit to the glory of God; and though they are planted in the house of God, yet not by God the Father, nor by Christ, only at best by ministers and churches hoping well of them, but mistaken in them:

And he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.] This, if understood of God the Father, designs his coming to the Jewish people by his ser-

vants the prophets, time after time; and at last by John the Baptist, and Jesus Christ and his apostles, seeking and requiring fruits of holiness, righteousness, and judgment; but found instead thereof the wild grapes of wickedness, oppression and violence: but if of Christ, which sense is rather to be chosen, it denotes his incarnation, or his coming into the world in human nature, and seeking, by his ministry, the fruits of faith in himself, and repentance towards God, among the people of the Jews, but found none; at least instances of faith in Israel were very rare, and few repented of their evil works; and hence he upbraided many with their impenitence and unbelief; see *Matt.* xi. 20.

7 Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?

If by the owner of the vineyard is meant God the Father, then by the dresser of the vineyard Jesus Christ is intended; but as he seems rather designed by the owner, the vine-dresser or "the gardeners," as the *Perfic* version reads, in the plural number, may signify the ministers of the word, to whom Christ, who is Solomon's anti-type, lets out his vineyard to dress and cultivate, it, and to keep the fruit of it; see *Cant.* viii, 11, 12.

Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none.] Or, "behold, there are three years since I came;" so read the *Vulgate* Latin and *Perfic* versions, and Beza's most ancient copy. Some think Christ here refers to the three years of his public ministry, which he had now gone through among the Jews with little success; but he seems rather to allude to the nature of fig-trees, which, if fruitful, bear in three years time; for even, בנורא שנה "a sort of white figs," which are the longest before they bring forth fruit to perfection, yet their fruit is ripe in three years time. These trees bear fruit once in three years; they bear fruit indeed every year, but their fruit does not come to maturity till after three years (i); and this may be the reason why this number is fixed upon; for if such fig-trees do not bring forth ripe fruit in three years time, there is little reason to expect any from them: and thus it was time after time with the Jewish nation; and so it is with carnal professors: hence it follows,

Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?] Or, "that it may not cumber; or render the ground useless;" as read the *Arabic* version, and one of Beza's copies; for unfruitful trees suck up the juices

(g) *Mishn. Celaim*, c. 6. §. 4.

(h) *Vajikra Rabba*, §. 23. fol. 164. 3. *Shirhashirim Rabba*, fol. 9, 2.

(i) *T. Hierof. Shevith*, fol. 35. 4. *Jarchi*, *Maimon. & Bartencra* in *Mishn. Demai*, c. 1. §. 1. & *Shevith*, c. 5. §. 1.

juices of the earth, and draw away nourishment from other trees that are near them, and so make the earth barren, and not only hurt other trees, but stand in the way and place of fruitful ones; and therefore it is best to cut them down. So barren professors, as were the Jews, are not only useless and unprofitable themselves, being fruitless, but make churches barren, and stand in the way of others, who are stumbled by them; they are grieving to God, to Christ, and to the blessed Spirit; and are troublesome and burdensome to churches, ministers, and true believers: and the cutting them down may regard the judgment of God upon the nation of the Jews, which Christ would not have his apostles and ministers interpose for the averting of; or the excommunication of such worthless and hurtful professors out of the churches by them.

8 And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it:

Which, if understood of God the Father, may intend the intercession of Christ with him, who not only intercedes for his elect, for those that are unconverted, that they may be converted; and for converted ones, for the carrying on of the work of sanctification; for fresh discoveries of pardoning grace; for consolation and support under trouble; for their final perseverance, and eternal glorification: but also for his enemies, for profane sinners, and for formal professors; for the sake of his own people among them, and for their preservation, and for the averting of divine judgments from them, at least as yet: and so the Jewish nation was spared for some time after this, though now deserving of immediate destruction. But rather, the intercession of the ministers of Christ, and other good men, may be here meant; who, as Abraham interceded for Sodom, and Moses and Aaron for Israel, so do they for a sinful nation, a barren and unfruitful church and people, and particular persons, that they may be spared, at least a little longer, as here:

Let it alone this year also] Have patience one year more, or a little while longer. The Ethiopic version renders it, "until the winter;" that being a time for digging about, and dunging of trees, as follows:

Till I shall dig about it, and dung it] These same phrases are used in the Misna (*k*), "מוביל ומעריך" "they dung and dig" in gardens of cucumbers, "and gourds, until the beginning of the year:" upon which their commentators say (*l*), that they carry dung into their gardens to moisten the earth,

and dig about the roots of the trees, and lay them bare, and cover them again, and prune them, and smother them to kill the worms. And by these phrases may be signified the various means Christ made use of by his own ministry, and by the ministry of his apostles, to make the Jews a fruitful people; and rather the means Christ's ministers make use of, as did the apostles with the Jews, to reach the cases of barren professors; as by *digging*, striking at, and exposing some secret sin or sins, which are the root and source of their barrenness; shewing them, that they have no root in Christ, nor the root of the matter in them, and declaring to them the insufficiency of a mere profession of religion to save them: and *dunging*, which as it supposes want of heat, or coldness, which is the cause of barrenness; and signifies, that such professors are without spiritual life, and without spiritual heat, or real warmth of love to Christ, his truths, ordinances, and people, and discharge their duty in a cold and lifeless manner; so it may design the means they make use of to warm and fire them with zeal for God, and true religion; by preaching the soul-quickenings doctrines of the Gospel, and by laying before them the agreeableness of a becoming zeal, and the disagreeableness of a lukewarm spirit and disposition, an indolence and unconcern for the glory of God, and interest of Christ.

9 And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.

If hereby barren professors, as the Jews, become fruitful, it is well, a good thing is done; it is well for themselves, they shall eat the fruit of their doings; it is well for the churches where they are, for good works are profitable to men; and it is well for the owner of the vineyard, and the dresser of it too; for when Christ has his fruit from his churches, his ministers have theirs also:

And if not, then after that] "For the time to come," as the Vulgate Latin; or, "the year following," as the Persian version renders it. *Thou shalt cut it down*] Do with it as thou pleatest, nothing more will be said or pleaded in its behalf, full consent shall be given, and no more intercession used: any trees might not be cut down, only barren ones; there is a law in *Deut. xx. 19, 20*, about cutting down trees, and which the Jews explain thus (*m*); "They may not cut down trees for meat without the city, nor withhold from them the course of water, that so they may become dry; as it is said, *thou shalt not destroy the trees*. Every barren tree it is lawful to cut down, even though a man hath no need of it; and so a tree for meat, which does hurt, and does

(k) Sheviith, c. 2. §. 2.

(l) Jarchi, Maimon. & Bartenora in ibid.

(m) Maimon, Hilchot Melacim, c. 6. §. 8. 9.

"does not produce but little fruit, and it is not worth while to labour about it, it is lawful to cut it down. And how much may an olive tree produce, and it may not be cut down? The fourth part of a kab of olives; and a palm-tree which yields a kab of dates may not be cut down." Much such a parable as this is formed by the Jews upon Moses's intercession for the people of Israel (n).

10 ¶ And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath:

That is, Jesus, as the Syriac and Persic versions express it; which was his work, he being a teacher sent from God, and who took all opportunities of instructing men in the truths of the Gospel; this was done either in Galilee, or in Judea, in one of the synagogues of some city there, for in their larger cities there were more synagogues than one. In Jerusalem, we are told (o), there were three hundred and ninety-four synagogues; and other writers (p) increase their number, and say, there were four hundred and eighty: and it was

On the sabbath] Which was now in force, and was religiously observed by Christ.

11 And, behold, there was a woman, which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.

In the synagogue, who, as infirm as she is hereafter described, got out to the place of worship; and which may be a rebuke to such, who, upon every trifling indisposition, keep at home, and excuse themselves from an attendance in the house of God:

Which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years] Or a weakness that was brought upon her by an evil spirit, by Satan, as appears from v. 16. who, by divine permission, had a power of inflicting diseases on mankind, as is evident from the case of Job; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "whom a demon had made infirm:" and this disorder had been of a long standing; she had laboured under it for the space of eighteen years, so that it was a known case, and had been given up as incurable, which made the following miracle the more illustrious and remarkable.

And was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself] Or lift up her head, look up, or stand upright; it was a thing utterly impossible, which she could by no means do; her body was convulsed, and every part so contracted, that, as the Persic

version renders it, she could not "stretch out a hand or a foot."

12 And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

Saw her in the synagogue among the people, either whilst, or after he had done teaching:

He called her to him] To come nearer him,

And said unto her] Of his own accord, without being asked by the woman, or any other for her, out of great compassion to her, seeing her in this miserable condition, and knowing full well the nature, cause, and long continuance of her disorder:

Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity] Which had not only bowed her, but it had bound her, as if she had been bound with cords; but Christ by saying these words, with his hands laid upon her, burst her bonds asunder, dispossessed the evil spirit, and delivered her from her long affliction.

13 And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

As he spoke the above words, which he sometimes did when he healed diseases.

And immediately she was made straight] She lifted up herself, stood upright, and her body and all the parts of it were as straight as ever they had been, or as any were in the synagogue.

And glorified God] That is, "the woman glorified God," as the Persic version expresses it; she was filled with thankfulness for the mercy, and gave God the glory of it. This woman was an emblem of a poor sinner, held in the bonds of iniquity by Satan, and led captive by him at his will; who can by no means raise himself; nor is he able to lift up his head to heaven, or look upwards to Christ for deliverance; and yet attends upon the outward ministry: when Christ, in his own time, meets with him under it, and manifests his power and grace, breaks his bonds asunder, delivers him out of Satan's hands, and from the bondage of his own corruptions; sets him straight, and causes him to lift up his head, and look to him for life and salvation; and so puts a new song into his mouth, even praise to God, to whose free grace and favour he readily ascribes his deliverance.

14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought

to

(n) Shemot Rabba, §. 43. fol. 141. 2.

(o) T. Bab. Cetu-

bot, fol. 105. 1.

(p) Pesikta in Jarchi in Isa. i. 21. Shir-

hashirim Rabba, fol. 20. 3. Ecks Rabbati, fol. 37. 4.

to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath-day.

For there never was but one ruler in a synagogue, whatever some writers have observed to the contrary; see the note on *Matt. ix. 18.* the Ethiopic version reads, "the chief priests," but wrongly; these dwelt at Jerusalem, and not in Galilee:

Answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day] His indignation was at Christ, and the miracle he had wrought, being filled with envy at the honour it would bring unto him; though he covered it under pretence of its being a violation of the sabbath, and that it ought not to have been done on such a day, and in such a place, which were appropriated not to servile works, but to religious worship;

And said unto the people] Over whom he had an authority, and who stood in awe of him, because of his office and dignity; and not daring to attack Christ himself, at least not directly, though he struck at him through the people, whose doctrine and miracles were so extraordinary,

There are six days in which men ought to work, in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath-day] Referring to the fourth command: but this observation and reproof were impertinent and needless, for the people did not come to be healed; for ought appears, the cure was unthought of and unexpected; nor was healing, especially as performed by Christ, by a word and a touch, a servile work, and therefore could not be any breach of the law referred to. The Ethiopic version reads "is there not a sixth day?" Come on that day; the day before the sabbath.

15 The Lord then answered him, and said, *Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?*

Though he did not direct his speech to Jesus, he knew that he struck at him, and suggested that he was a violator of the sabbath, as well as the people: and therefore, in defence of himself, and of what he had done, and to expose the hypocrisy of this man, made answer as follows,

Thou hypocrite] The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read in the plural, *hypocrites*, as do the Complutensian edition, and four ancient copies of Beza's, and the Alexandrian copy; but the Syriac and Persic versions read in the singular, *hypocrite*; as this man was, who covered his malice and envy at Christ, with a shew of zeal for the sabbath-day; and yet did that upon it, which must be allowed by themselves, and others, to be a

much greater violation of the sabbath, than this cure could ever be thought to be:

Doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall] Or rack, where he is fastened with a rope;

And lead him away to watering?] To some place of water, where he may drink, after having filled himself at the rack: and that this was agreeable to their own canons and practice, that beasts might be led out on a sabbath-day, is certain; for they deliver various rules concerning leading them out with what they might, and with what they might not be brought out; and particularly, among others, mention asses and heifers (*q*); and they speak (*r*) of leading them to water, not only to drink of it, but to wash their chains in it, which, it seems, received pollution, and needed washing, and might be done on a sabbath-day; yea, they allow, that not only a beast may be led out to watering, but a man might fill a vessel of water, and pour it out into a trough for it, provided he did not directly set it before it (*s*): And therefore very justly does our Lord observe to the ruler of the synagogue their own practices towards a beast, in defence of his works of mercy to men.

16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath-day?

Not only a woman, a rational creature, and much preferable, as such, to an irrational one; but a descendent of Abraham, of whom the Jews gloried, and in their descent from him prided themselves, and trusted; and chose to call their women by this name (*t*), which gave them a character above others; and who, besides all this, was doubtless a good woman, a spiritual worshipper of the God of Israel, who in a spiritual sense, was a daughter of Abraham, that walked in the steps of his faith, and was now a believer in Christ, and appeared to be a chosen vessel of salvation:

Whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years] With a bodily distemper: that none could loose her from in so long a time. The Persic version, very wrongly, reads, "twelve years;" though in *v. 11.* it observes the right number. Should not such an one

Be loosed from this bond on the sabbath-day?] The force of Christ's reasoning is this, That if it was lawful

(*q*) *Misn. Sabbat*, c. 5. §. 1—4. & 13. 2. *T. Bab. Sabbat*, fol. 51. 2. & 52. 1. & *Piske Tosephot* in *ibid.* art. 226—228, 233.
(*r*) *Bartenora* in *Misn. Sabbat*, c. 5. §. 1. (*s*) *T. Bab. Erubin*, fol. 20. 2. (*t*) *T. Bab. Cetubot*, fol. 72. 2. *Tzeror Hammor*, fol. 109. 1. So prince's daughter in *Cant. vii. 1.* is interpreted, a daughter of Abraham, *T. Bab. Chagigah*, fol. 3. 1. & *Succah*, fol. 49. 2.

lawful on a sabbath-day to lead out a beast to watering, to quench its thirst, that so it may not suffer so much as one day for want of water; how much more reasonable must it be, that a rational creature, one of Abraham's posterity, and a religious person, who had been for eighteen years under a sore affliction, through the power of Satan over her, by divine permission, should be freed from so long and sore an affliction on the sabbath-day? If mercy is to be shewn to beasts, much more to men and women.

17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

When he had argued with them from their own practices, and in a way so strong and rational, that carried such evidence and conviction with it,

All his adversaries were ashamed] Not only the ruler of the synagogue, but the scribes and Pharisees, that were present, who followed him wherever he went, and were his implacable enemies; these were confounded and silenced; shame appeared in their countenances; they could not lift up their heads, and look him in the face.

And all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him] For the doctrines he taught, and the miracles he wrought, and his wise and close reasonings at this time, to the shame and confusion of all that opposed him: for his audience consisted of different sorts, and what he said and did, had different effects upon them. Some were filled with joy, and others with wrath, malice, and envy. And this is true with respect to spiritual and eternal things. Glorious things have been done by Christ in eternity, by becoming the surety of his people, by entering into a covenant with his Father on their account, and by taking the care and charge of their persons, and of all grace, blessings, and promises for them: and in time, by assuming their nature, fulfilling the law, bringing in an everlasting righteousness, making peace and reconciliation, procuring pardon, and finishing the work of redemption and salvation; and now in heaven, by entering as the forerunner for them, appearing in the presence of God on their account, presenting their prayers, and making intercession for them: and these are glorious things; they make for the glory of all the divine perfections; they issue in the glory of Christ himself; and in consequence of them, the saints enjoy eternal glory and happiness: these are things of the greatest importance, are wonderful and amazing, and for which saints and angels will glorify God both here and hereafter; and these occasion joy and glad-

ness in the Lord's people now. For not carnal and profane persons, or hypocrites, and formal professors, or Pharisees, and self-righteous persons, rejoice at these things; but such as are the Lord's own people, who are openly his; who have passed under a work of the Spirit of God, who have seen their need of these things, and are sensible of the value of them; who know Christ, and love him, and believe in him.

18 ¶ Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?

The same with *the kingdom of heaven*, in *Matt.* xiii. 31. and so the Ethiopic version reads it here, *And whereunto shall I resemble it?* Of this way of speaking, see the note on *Mark* iv. 30.

19 It is like a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.

Like, both for its smallness at first, and its after increase; wherefore both the Evangelists, Matthew and Mark, observe, that it is the least of all seeds; which is true of the ministry of the Gospel, of the Gospel-church-state, and of the grace of God in the hearts of his people:

Which a man took and cast into his garden] The Ethiopic version renders it, *and sowed in his field*, as in *Matt.* xiii. 31. though mustard used to be sown in gardens as well as in fields. "Says R. Simeon ben Chelphetha (u), I have one stalk of mustard-seed, בחרר של, "in my garden;" so Buxtorf (x) translates it. And by the place in the text, where this seed is cast, may be meant, either the field of the world, where the Gospel is preached, and churches are raised; or the garden of the church, where the word and ordinances are administered, and in the hearts of the members of it the grace of God is implanted and increased; see *Cant.* iv. 12, 13.

And it grew and waxed a great tree] Which may design the spread of the Gospel in the world, the flourishing state of the church of Christ, and the growth of grace in the hearts of believers.

And the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it] The Syriac version reads in the singular number, *the fowl of the air*; not Satan, and his principalities and powers, which devour the seed sown by the way-side; nor the angels of heaven; but rather gracious men on earth, who sit under the shadow of a Gospel-ministry with great delight; and "make their nests," as the Perfic version here renders

(u) T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 20. 2. (x) Lex. Talmud. col. 823.

ders the words, and take up their residence in Gospel-churches; see the notes on *Matt. xiii. 31, 32.* and on *Mark. iv. 31, 32.*

20 ¶ And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

That is, Jesus, as the Syriac and Persic versions express it; besides the parable of the grain of mustard-seed, that also of the leaven hid in three measures of meal:

Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? Either the Gospel of the kingdom, and the mysteries of it; or the church, which is Christ's kingdom; or the grace of God in the heart, which makes meet for the kingdom of glory; the first seems rather to be intended; see the note on *Matt. xiii. 33.*

21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

Which is small in quantity, but is of a swelling, spreading quality; and fitly expresses the small beginnings of the Gospel-ministry, and its increase; also the state and case of Gospel-churches, and the nature of the grace of God; unless false doctrine should rather be meant, which privately, secretly, and by little and little, got into the churches of Christ, the kingdom of God, and spread itself all over them, as in the times of the papacy:

Which a woman took. Christ, and his ministers, wisdom, and her maidens, understanding it of the Gospel; but if the leaven of error is intended, that woman, Jezebel, may be meant, who calls herself a prophetess, and teaches, and seduces the servants of God, *Rev. ii. 20.*

And hid in three measures of meal. Among a few of God's people at first, both among Jews and Gentiles,

Till the whole was leavened. Until all the elect of God are gathered in, and evangelized by it; even the whole fulness of the Gentiles, and all the people of the Jews, which shall be saved in the latter day: but if the parable is to be understood of the false doctrine and discipline of the anti-Christian and apostate church of Rome, it may denote the small beginnings of the mystery of iniquity, which began to work in the apostles times, by the errors and heresies then propagated, and the manner in which the man of sin was privately introduced; whose coming is *after the working of Satan, with signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness*; first among a few, and then more, until at length *the whole world wondered after the beast*, *2 Thess. ii. 7, 9, 10. Rev. xiii. 3.*

22 And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.

Either of Galilee, or of Judea, or both; since he was upon his journey from Galilee, through Judea, to Jerusalem, as it follows:

Teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. As he was journeying he taught in every place he came, where he could have an opportunity; his delight was to do good both to the bodies and souls of men, and he was constant and assiduous in it.

23 ¶ Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

Not one of his disciples, but one of the company, in some one of the cities or villages he passed through; or as he was in the road to Jerusalem:

Are there few that be saved? It is a received opinion among the Jews (y), that all Israel shall have a part in the world to come; and this man might put the question to know whether Christ was of this sentiment or no. And by some things he had observed drop from him, and it may be the foregoing parables, which express the small beginnings of his kingdom, and seem to signify, that at first his Gospel should be received but by a few, though it should afterwards spread, he might collect, that his sense was, there would be but a few saved; or this might be a question of mere curiosity and speculation, as it seems to be by Christ's treatment of it, who does not give a direct answer to it, but puts him and others upon shewing a concern for their own salvation.

And he said unto them. Not to the man only, that put the question; but to the whole company; though the Persic and Ethiopic versions read, "he said unto him," as follows:

24 Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

For what is meant by the *strait gate*, and by entering in at it, see the note on *Matthew. vii. 13.* To *strive*, is to be diligent in the use of means; to search the scriptures with care; to attend on the preaching of the word with constancy, neglecting no opportunity, to pray earnestly for spiritual light, knowledge, and grace; to contend with every enemy that opposes the salvation of the soul, as sin, Satan, and the world; to bear all reproaches and persecutions, and press through all difficulties, for the prize of the incorruptible crown. The metaphor seems to be taken from the striving, wrestling, and combat in the Olympic games, for a corruptible crown.

For many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. Either when it is too late, when

(y) Mish. Sanhedrim, c. II. §. 1.

when the door is shut; or else before, very faintly, in a superficial manner, from a mere natural affection, from a principle of self-love, which leads every one to desire happiness; and by very indirect and improper methods, by their own civility, morality, and righteousness; by works of the law, moral, or ceremonial; or by a profession of religion, and an outward compliance with the ordinances of the Gospel, and not by Christ, and faith in him.

25 When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

Risen up from table, or off of his couch, the entertainment being over: and so here, the Gospel-feast or dispensation being at an end, and all the guests come in, who were effectually called, and long patience and forbearance being used towards others; or "has entered in," as the Vulgate Latin version reads, and so Beza's ancient copy, and one of Stephens's; is come from the wedding; see chap. xii. 36. Christ having espoused all his elect to himself by the ministry of the word: for by *the master of the house* is meant, the Bridegroom of the church, the Head of the body, the King of saints, who is Son over his own house, and High priest there; of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named: this name is used of the divine Being (x).

And hath shut to the door] The door of mercy and of hope; the door of faith; the preaching of the word, and the administration of ordinances, when these shall be no more:

And ye begin to stand without] Or "do stand without;" without the holy city, where dogs are; having no admittance to the nuptial chamber, to the marriage-supper of the Lamb, and the joys of heaven:

And to knock at the door] Which shows how near some persons may come to heaven, and yet not enter there, even to the very door; and what an expectation, yea, an assurance they may have, of admission into it, not at all doubting of it; and therefore knock as if they were some of the family, and had a right to enter; but not finding the door open to them, so soon as they imagined, they begin to call as well as knock:

Saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us] They acknowledge Christ to be Lord, as all will at the last day, to the glory of God the Father, even professors and profane; they repeat the word, *Lord*,

to shew the vehemency and earnestness of their intreaty; and according to the Syriac and Perfic versions, they claim an interest in Christ, which read, "*our Lord, our Lord*;" and on account of which they doubted not, but the door would be opened: but alas! he was only their Lord in a professional way; they had only called him *Lord*, *Lord*, but had never truly and heartily yielded obedience to him; their hearts had never been opened to him, and he had never had a place there, nor his Gospel; wherefore though they knock, he will not open;

And he shall answer and say unto you] The Perfic version adds, "nay, but be ye gone hence," for the following reason,

I know you not whence you are] Not but that Christ, being the omniscient God, will know who they are, from whence they come, of what country and place they be, and to whom they belong; but the sense is, that he will not own them, and express any approbation of them, as his; but will treat them as strangers, that come, it is not known from whence; he will reject them, as not being born from above, as not being the sheep of his fold, or members of his true church: they did not come from heaven, they were not heaven-born souls, or partakers of the heavenly calling, and therefore shall not be received there; they belonged to the men of the world, and were of their father the devil, and shall be sent to him: so the foolish virgins, or formal professors of religion, and such as have been preachers of the Gospel, will intreat Christ at the last day, and shall have such an answer as this returned to them, which will be very awful and startling; see the notes on *Matthew* vii. 23. and chapter xxv. 12.

26 Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

Or ye shall say; in favour of themselves, and in order to be admitted within, the following pleas will be made by them:

We have eaten and drunk in thy presence] Which may be understood both literally of many, who were miraculously fed by Christ, or at whose tables he had eat and drank, and they with him; as did not only publicans and sinners, but some of the Pharisees, who invited him to their houses; and in a religious sense, of many who eat of the legal sacrifices; and of others, who eat the bread, and drink the wine at the Lord's table; all which will be insufficient to introduce men into the kingdom and glory of Christ: natural relation to Christ, which the Jews may claim, being born of them, and personal acquaintance with him, and a bare profession

(x) T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 35. 1.

profession of him, will be of no avail another day :

And thou hast taught in our streets] In the streets of many cities in Galilee and Judea : it was customary with the Jewish doctors to teach in the streets : " Says Rabba, Behold I am as Ben Azzai " in the streets of Tiberias (a) ; " the gloss upon it is, who was *ר' אבא* " expounding in the " streets of Tiberias. " And it is said (b) of Rabban Jochanan ben Zacc'ai, " That he was " sitting in the shade of the temple, and expounding all the whole day ; " the gloss on the place is, " The temple being an hundred cubits high, " its shade went very far in the street, which is " before the mountain of the house ; and because " the street was large, and held abundance of " men, he was expounding there by reason of the " heat, for no school could hold them. " And it is also said of R. Chija (c), that " he went out " and taught his brother's two sons, *בניו* " in " the street. " So that what our Lord did, was no other than what was usual with their doctors ; nor is this contrary to what is said in *Matt. xii. 19.* see the note there : this is also a fruitless plea, and which will be of no service ; it will signify nothing, to have heard Christ preached, or Christ himself preach, unless there is faith in him, which works by love ; for not hearers of the word only, but doers of it, are regarded.

27 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are ; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

The Persic version adds, " be gone from my sight, and be far from my door ; " expressing indignation at them, an abhorrence of them, as not being able to bear them in his sight, or near unto him :

I tell you, I know you not whence ye are] This is repeated, and with a strong asseveration, to denote the certainty of the truth expressed, and to cut off all hope in them, of ever succeeding by their intreaties and importunity :

Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity] Or " of a lie, " as the Syriac and Persic versions render it : for they were deceitful workers, they professed what they did not from the heart believe ; they said they were christians, but were not, and now are found liars ; they only attended on the word and ordinances in an hypocritical way, and trusted in, and depended upon, their outward profession of religion, and subjection to ordinances ; and by so doing, instead of working righteousness, wrought iniquity ; and so, as they did not submit

to Christ and his righteousness, they are bid to depart from him, as wicked and unrighteous men, as they were : the word *all* is here used, which is not in *Matthew vii. 23.* but agrees with *Psal. vi. 8.* to which there seems to be a reference, though it is omitted here, in the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions ; see the note on *Matt. vii. 23.*

28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.

See the note on *Matthew viii. 22.* This will be upon hearing the above sentence and character, *Depart from me, &c.* and will be increased,

When ye shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob] Whose offspring they were, and to whom they stood related according to the flesh ; and of descent from whom they boasted, and even trusted in it, thinking themselves the favourites of heaven, and expecting to be admitted into the kingdom of God on account of it : sad will be the disappointment of such persons ; a being born of religious parents, will neither give right unto, nor meetness for eternal glory ; regeneration is not of blood :

And all the prophets in the kingdom of God] Whose prophecies were transmitted to them, and whose books they had in their hands, and read ; and who desired to see and hear what they did, and which they now plead, and yet they did not enjoy, but were nevertheless happy :

And you yourselves thrust out] With indignation and contempt, with " shame and ignominy, " as the Persic version adds ; not suffered to go in with them, though their sons and successors ; but bid to depart, and ordered to be for ever separated from them, as only fit company for devils and damned spirits.

29 And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

From all parts of the world, from every nation under the heavens ; meaning the Gentiles ; and which will be a greater aggravation of the punishment of the Jews, and cause still more rage and madness : these shall

Come from the east, and from the west] From the rising of the sun, to the going down of the same, *Isaiah xlv. 6. Malachi i. 11.*

And from the north, and from the south] From the most distant parts of the world inhabited by men ; see *Isaiah xliii. 5, 6.* God has his chosen

(a) T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 29. 1.

(b) T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 26. 1.

(c) T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 16. 2.

ones, and Christ has a people in all parts of the world; and therefore his Gospel must be preached to all nations, for the gathering of them in, which will be done in the latter day; and in the resurrection morn, as these will be raised in the several places where they will have been buried, they will come from thence, and make one body, and will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and will be for ever with him:

And shall sit down in the kingdom of God] In Christ's kingdom, in the new heavens, and new earth, as persons sit down at a table to partake of a feast; see *Luke* xxii. 30. and in the ultimate glory, where they shall have rest, peace, and joy for evermore. The Ethiopic version renders it; "they shall rejoice in the kingdom of God;" they shall partake of the joys of heaven; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away; and the Persic version, "and they shall take a repose, and sit and rest;" they shall rest from all their labour, and be in perfect ease and peace; see the note on *Matthew* viii. 11.

30 And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

The Gentiles, the most mean and abject, afar from God, *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel*, called last of all; these shall be first, and sit down among patriarchs and prophets, men of the first rank here on earth, in the kingdom of heaven, and enjoy the same glory and happiness with them:

And there are first which shall be last] The Jews, who were the first visible professing people of God, to whom the oracles of God, and outward privileges and ordinances were given; who had the Messiah first sent to them, and the Gospel first preached among them; these shall be last, be rejected and despised, and shut out of the kingdom of heaven, they thought themselves heirs of, and expected to enjoy; see *Matt.* xix. 30. and chap. xx. 16.

31 ¶ The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee.

Certain who dwelt in Galilee, for they were in all parts of the country: these being nettled and filled with indignation at Christ, because of the parables he had that day delivered, the miracles he had wrought, and the several awful and striking things which dropped from him, and which they knew respected them; contrived to get rid of him, by frightening him with a design of Herod's to take away his life, should he continue there: for this seems to be rather a stratagem of theirs, than of Herod's; though it may be that Herod might

take this method, and make use of these men in this way, to terrify him; fearing to lay hold on him, and put him to death; partly because of the people, and partly because of the remaining uneasiness and terror of his mind for taking off the head of John the Baptist:

Saying, Get thee out, and depart hence] In all haste, as soon as possible:

For Herod will kill thee] He is resolved upon it, he has formed a design, and will quickly take methods to execute it. This was Herod the tetrarch of Galilee; from whence we learn, that Christ was as yet in Galilee, though he was journeying towards Jerusalem, *ŷ. 22.* for Herod's jurisdiction reached no farther than Galilee: this was either a device of Herod's, or of the Pharisees, or of both, to get rid of Christ in the easiest manner.

32 And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.

Tell Herod, who it may be sent them, of which Christ was not ignorant, nor of his design in it; and who, as Nero, for his cruelty is compared to a lion, so he for his subtilty in this instance, as well as in the whole of his conduct, to a fox; though some think Christ has a regard to the Pharisees, and their craftiness, in forming this story, pretending good will to him, by acquainting him of Herod's malicious designs, when their view was only to scare him out of their country; so the false prophets and teachers, are for their cunning, subtilty, and flattery, compared to foxes, *Cant.* ii. 15. *Ezek.* xiii. 4. as well as for their greediness and voraciousness; the word is used with the Jews, for a vain and empty man, in opposition to a good man; as in that saying of R. Jannai (d), "Be thou the tail of lions, and not the head of foxes;" or vain men, as the gloss explains it:

Behold, I cast out devils] Or "I will cast out devils," as the Ethiopic version reads, in spite of him, let him do his worst:

And I do cures to day and to morrow] And so for some time to come; and which was doing good, and was what Herod and the Pharisees, had they any humanity in them, would have rejoiced at, and have chose that he should have continued with them, and not have threatened to take his life, or have took any methods to send him from them:

And the third day I shall be perfected] That is, in a little time after, I shall be made perfect by sufferings, my course will be finished, and I shall have

(d) Pirke Abot, c. 4. *ŷ. 15.* & Jarchi in *ibid.*

have done all the work compleatly I came about; and till that time comes, it is not in his power, nor yours, nor all the men on earth, or devils in hell, to take away my life, or hinder me doing what I am about.

33 Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the *day* following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

The Syriac version reads, "I must work," and so the Arabic; as going about doing good, casting out devils, and healing diseases:

To day and to morrow, and the day following] A few days more in Galilee, and towards Jerusalem: all the Oriental versions read, "the day following" "I shall depart;" either out of this world; or out of Galilee, and go to Jerusalem, and there suffer and die:

For it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem] Because the great sanhedrim only sat at Jerusalem, to whom it belonged to try and judge a prophet; and if found false, to condemn him, and put him to death: the rule is this (*d*); "They do not judge, neither a tribe, nor a false prophet, nor an high priest, but by the sanhedrim of seventy and one." Not but that prophets sometimes perished elsewhere, as John the Baptist in Galilee; but not according to a judicial process, in which way Christ the prophet was to be cut off, nor was it common; instances of this kind were rare, and always in a violent way: and even such as were sentenced to death by the lesser sanhedrim, were brought to Jerusalem, and publicly executed there, whose crimes were of another sort; for so runs the canon (*e*); "They do not put any one to death by the sanhedrim, which is in his city, nor by the sanhedrim in Jabneh; but they bring him to the great sanhedrim in Jerusalem, and keep him till the feast; and put him to death on a feast-day, as it is said Deut. xvii. 13. And all the people shall hear and fear." And since Jerusalem was the place where the prophets were usually put to death, it follows,

34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!

These words, with what follow, as they stand in Matt. xxiii. 37—39. were delivered by Christ,

when he was in the temple at Jerusalem; but here they were spoken by him when in Galilee, in Herod's jurisdiction; so that it appears, that the same words were spoken by Christ at different times, in different places, and to different persons: unless it can be thought, that Luke transcribed them from Matthew, and inserts them here, on occasion of Christ's having mentioned the perishing of a prophet in Jerusalem; where many had been killed and put to death, in one way or another, and particularly in the following:

And stonest them that are sent unto thee] As Zechariah, 2 Chron. xxiv. 20—22. and others:

How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!] And therefore ought not to have been condemned as a false prophet by their sanhedrim, as he suggests he should be, and as he afterwards was; see the note on Matt. xxiii. 37.

35 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

That is, would be left so in a little time, both city and temple; see the note on Matt. xxiii. 38.

And verily I say unto you] I affirm in the strongest manner:

Ye shall not see me] The Arabic version adds, "from henceforth," and so some copies, as in Matt. xxiii. 39. and so the Ethiopic version, "from this time;" that he spoke these words, whether in Galilee, or in the temple:

Until the time come] Or "until he shall come;" meaning himself, and his second coming:

When ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord] Not they themselves in person, but their posterity, who will be converted in the latter day; and shall acknowledge the Messiah, the blessed of the Lord, who will come in his name to judge the world in righteousness: or else the meaning is, that when Christ shall come a second time, and every eye shall see him, these Jews, among the rest, shall behold him, whom they have pierced, and mourn; and wish themselves among those, that shall receive him with joyful acclamations; and however, will be obliged to own him as the Messiah, and to confess that he comes in the name, and with the authority of the Lord, and that he is blessed for evermore.

(*d*) Misn. Sanhedrim, c. 1. §. 5. & T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 18. 2.

(*e*) Misn. Sanhedrim, c. 10. §. 4.

C H A P. XIV.

In this chapter we have the cure which our Lord wrought upon a man that had a dropsy, on the sabbath-day, and his justifying himself therein against those who were offended at his doing it on that day, ch. 1—6. He reproveth the pride of the Pharisees, and exhorteth them to humility and hospitality, v. 7—14. The parable of a great supper, from which the invited excuse themselves: whereby he upbraids the Jews with their ingratitude; and foretelleth their rejection, and the calling of the Gentiles, v. 15—24. Sheweth them what those must do that will be his disciples, v. 25—33. and telleth them the unprofitableness of unsavoury salt, v. 34—35.

AND it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath-day, that they watched him.

The Persian version adds, “on a certain day;” and it is afterwards said to be the sabbath-day. This seems to have been somewhere or other in Galilee; see chapter xvii. 11.

As he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees] Or rather, one of the rulers, and of the sect of the Pharisees: and he might be either a ruler of a synagogue, or a member either of the lesser or greater sanhedrim; such another as Nicodemus, who was of the Pharisees, and a ruler of the Jews, *John* iii. 1. for that there was any distinction among the Pharisees as a sect, does not appear: to this man’s house Christ went, after he came out of the synagogue, being invited by him;

To eat bread on the sabbath-day] The sabbath-day was a feasting day with the Jews, in which they made very large and magnificent entertainments, for the honour of the sabbath; and he was reckoned the most praise-worthy, that exceeded this way; and no doubt, since this man was a Pharisee, one that was tenacious of the traditions of the elders, and was also a ruler, his table was well spread: the rules concerning this part of keeping the sabbath, are these (a); “The wise men say, “A man ought to prepare abundance of food and “spiced liquors, for the sabbath, all according “to a man’s substance; and whoever multiplies “in the expences of the sabbath, and in preparing “food, much and good, lo, he is praise-worthy. “—A man is obliged to eat three meals, or feasts, “on a sabbath-day; one in the evening, and one “in the morning, and one at the time of the meat “offering; and he ought to take heed to those three “feasts, that he does not diminish them at all;

(a) Maimon. Hilchot c. 30. §. 7—9.

“and even a poor man that is maintained by alms “must keep the three feasts.” And this last canon or rule, is of the utmost importance with them; for they say (b), “Whoever keeps the three feasts “on the sabbath-day, shall be delivered from three “punishments, from the sorrows of the Messiah, “from the judgment of hell, and from the war “of Gog and Magog.”

That they watched him] That is, those that sat down to meat with him, the lawyers and Pharisees; and it is very probable, that it was not out of pure respect to him, that he was asked to eat meat at this ruler’s house; but with a design to observe whatever might be said, or done by him, they could take any advantage from, against him.

2 And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy.

A man who sat just before him, as he was at table; who either came there of himself, in order to receive a cure; or rather, since it was in a private house, and he at table too, was brought and set there on purpose by the Pharisees, to try whether Christ would heal him on the sabbath-day, that they might have somewhat against him; which they doubted not but he would do, knowing his compassionate and beneficent disposition to do good to creatures in distress, whenever he had an opportunity:

Which had the dropsy] Or “gathered waters,” as the Syriac version renders it; was filled with water, which is the nature of that disease, and distinguishes it from what is called the dry dropsy: “This disease is a preternatural collection of serum, or water in some part of the body; or a “too great proportion thereof in the blood. The “dropsy acquires different names, from the different parts it afflicts, or the different parts the “waters are collected in; that of the abdomen, “or lower belly, called simply and absolutely and “dropsy, is particularly denominated *ascites*; that “of the whole habit of the body, *anasarca*, or “*leucoplegmatia*; that of the head, *hydracephalus*; “that of the scrotum, *hydrocele*.—There is also “a species of this disease, supposed to be caused, “instead of water, by a collection of wind, called “*tympanites*; and by Hippocrates, the *dry dropsy*: “we also meet with dropsies of the breast, pericardium, uterus, ovaries, &c. The causes of dropsies in general, are whatever may obstruct “the serous part of the blood, so as to make it “stagnate in the vessels; or burst the vessels themselves, so as to let the blood out among the “membranes; or weaken and relax the tone of “the

(b) T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 118. 1. Klunchi in Isa, lviii, 13.

"the vessels; or thin the blood, and make it watery; or lessen perspiration. These causes are various, namely, sometimes acute diseases, scirrhous tumors of any of the more noble viscera, excessive evacuations, particularly hæmorrhages, hard drinking, &c. The *ascites*, or water-dropsy of the abdomen, is the most usual case, and what we particularly call the *dropsy*. its symptoms are tumors, first of the feet and legs, and afterwards of the abdomen, which keep continually growing; and if the belly be struck or shook, there is heard a quashing of water; add to this, three other attendants, namely, a dyspnoea, intense thirst, and sparing urine; with which may be numbered heaviness, listlessness, costiveness, a light fever, and an emaciation of the body (c)." Such we must suppose to be the case of this man, and that he was now in such a condition, as to be thought incurable.

3 And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath-day?

All the Oriental versions for *lawyers*, read scribes: these with the Pharisees, were got together in a body, in their brother Pharisee's house, to watch the motions of Christ; who knew their designs upon him, and the thoughts of their hearts, and made answer to them, by putting the following question;

Saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath-day? The occasion of the question, was the object before him, whom Christ had a compassionate regard to, and determined to cure; but knowing that these men were catching at every thing to traduce him, was desirous of having their sentiments first; not but that he knew full well what was agreeable to the law of God, and what was not; and what also were the traditions of their elders, which they held, and which allowed of healing on the sabbath-day, where life was in danger.

4 And they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go;

Or were silent, choosing to say nothing which might countenance such an action; and yet knew not how to condemn it:

And he took him, and healed him, and let him go] He took him by the hand, or laid his hands on him; he touched him, and it may be stroked the part affected; and in an instant, the prodigious swelling of his body came down: for he who at his rebuke could dry up the sea, could by a touch dry up such a quantity of water as was in this man's body; and then he dismissed him from the table and company, and he went home perfectly cured.

(c) Chambers's Cyclopædia on the word *dropsy*.

5 And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?

They murmuring secretly at what he had done:

Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath-day? Being just ready to be drowned there; and therefore it must be much more right and necessary to cure a man, a reasonable creature, just drowning with a dropsy, as this man was. The Syriac and Persian versions, instead of *an ass*, read *a son*, very wrongly: a like kind of reasoning is used by Christ, in *Matt. xii. 11. Luke xiii. 15.* see the notes there.

6 And they could not answer him again to these things.

The justice, equity, mercy, and humanity that appeared in our Lord's reasonings, and the cases he instanced in, being agreeable to their own tenets and practices, their mouths were shut up; and they could not return an answer to them, without being exposed.

7 ¶ And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

Bidden to the dinner at the Pharisee's house, particularly the lawyers, or scribes and Pharisees:

When he marked how they chose out the chief rooms] The uppermost places at the table, which these men loved, coveted, and fought after; see the note on *Matt. xxiii. 6.*

Saying unto them] As follows,

8 When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

Bidden to a wedding-dinner, or to any other; such an one as the present entertainment was, which was not a marriage-feast, for they might not marry on the sabbath-day; see the note on *John ii. 1.* but a common sabbath-meal:

Sit not down in the highest room] In the chief place at table, as soon as ye come in:

Lest a more honourable man] For age, office, dignity, wisdom, learning, or riches:

Than thou be bidden of him] Of the master of the feast; and who may not yet be come, and for whom the chief place may be designed, and will better suit him.

9 And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

Invited both to the feast, and who is the master of it, and has a right to dispose of, and order his guests at his table, as he thinks fit,

Come and say to thee, Give this man place] Pray rise up, and give this honourable man this seat, which is more suitable for a person of his rank and figure, and take another:

And thou begin with shame to take the lowest room] Or place, which must unavoidably fill a man with shame and confusion; because hereby his pride and vanity in affecting the uppermost room will be publicly exposed; and he, who before sat in the chief place, will have the mortification, before all the guests, to be seated in the lowest.

10 But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

Art invited to an entertainment, and the time is come,

Go and sit down in the lowest room] Place thyself at the lower end of the table, or in the most inferior seat; which will shew humility and lowliness of mind, and prevent shame and mortification; since there can be no putting into a lower place, and there may be an advance to an higher:

That when he that bade thee cometh] Into the dining-room, and observes in what place thou art:

He may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher] To a more honourable seat at table, pointing to it, and saying, There is such a seat empty, go up and take it, it best becomes thee:

Then shalt thou have worship] Or glory, as the word signifies; honour and esteem, instead of shame and blushing; not only from the master of the feast, but

In the presence of them that sit at meat with thee] And from them, who will take notice of the honour done thee, and will entertain an high opinion of thee, and commend thee for thy humility and modesty. Advice, like to this, is given by Solomon in *Prov.* xxv. 6, 7. and which is explained by the Jews in like manner as here (d): "Ben Azzai used to say, Descend from thy place two or three degrees, and sit; it is better that it should be said to thee, *לך עלך* go up; than that it should be said to thee, descend, as it is said in *Proverbs*

"xxv. 7." Which is elsewhere (e) thus expressed: "R. Akiba taught it (or expounded *Proverbs* xxv. 7.) in the name of R. Simeon ben Azzai, "Remove from thy place two or three seats, and sit until it is said to thee, *לך עלך* go up; but do not go up, (that is, first) for it will be said to thee, descend: it is better that it should be said to thee, Go up, go up; than that it should be said to thee, Go down, go down: and ben Hillel used to say, "My humiliation is my exaltation, and my exaltation is my humiliation."

11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Either in the above way, or any other, *Shall be abased*] Humbled and mortified;

And he that humbleth himself] Behaves in an humble and modest manner,

Shall be exalted] See the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 12.

12 ¶ Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee.

As he had given advice and instructions to the guests, so he likewise thought fit to give some to the master of the house, that had given both him and them an invitation to the present meal; observing, very likely, that his guests consisted of such persons as are hereafter described.

When thou makest a dinner or a supper] Any entertainment for other persons, at what time of the day soever, whether sooner or later, at noon, or at night, on sabbath-days, or others:

Call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours] That is, do not invite thy rich friends, rich brethren, and rich kinsmen, as well as not rich neighbours: not that our Lord's meaning is, that such should not be invited at all; which would be to destroy friendship and sociable conversation among persons in such a relation, and of such rank and fortune: but his sense is, that not these only should be invited, to the neglect of poor friends, poor brethren, poor kinsmen, and poor neighbours; and who, comparatively speaking, should rather be invited than the former, as being what would be more serviceable to them, and of a greater advantage in the issue to the master of the feast himself.

Left

(d) Abot R. Nathan, c. 25. fol. 6. 4.

(e) *Vajikra Rabba*, §. 1. fol. 146. 4. *Vid. Shemot Rabba*, §. 45. fol. 142. 1.

Lest they also bid thee again] And thee only, and not the poor, to as grand an entertainment, which is commonly done:

And a recompence be made thee] One feasting bout for another, so that there will be no obligation on either side; and this will be all the advantage that will be gained; the return is made here, and there will be no reward hereafter.

13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:

Makest an entertainment for others, a dinner, or a supper:

Call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind] That is, the poor maimed, the poor lame, and the poor blind; otherwise it is possible that rich men may be maimed, lame, and blind; whereas these are not intended, but such who are in indigent circumstances, that stand in need of a meal, and to whom it is welcome.

14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

Blessed by God, with an increase of worldly substance, or with spiritual blessings, and with eternal glory and happiness; and by these poor objects, who will pray to God for a blessing upon such a kind benefactor:

For they cannot recompense thee] By inviting again to a like entertainment, as rich guests can do, and when they have done that there is nothing else to be expected; but such that entertain the poor can have no return from them, and yet a retaliation will be made:

For thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just] When the just shall rise again, which will be the first resurrection; and happy is he that has part in it: for the righteous, or *dead in Christ* will rise first; and notice will be taken of the good works of the saints, particularly of their acts of beneficence to the poor members of Christ; and which they have done in faith, from a principle of love to Christ, and with a view to the glory of God, and the good of their fellow-creatures and christians.

15 ¶ And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

One of the scribes, lawyers, or Pharisees, that were guests at this feast:

Heard these things] Which were spoken by Christ, and was pleased and affected with them, though he was ignorant:

He said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God] In the world to come, in the kingdom of the Messiah; concerning feasting in which, the Jews had entertained very gross notions; and which this man was reminded of by Christ's making mention of the resurrection of the just, and of recompense at that time, which the Jews expected at the Messiah's coming. They suppose, that God will make a splendid feast, a sumptuous entertainment; in which, besides bread, which they call, לחם של מלכות "the bread of the kingdom," and "the bread of the world to come (f)," there will be great variety of flesh, fish, and fowl; plenty of generous wine, and all sorts of delicious fruit: particularly they speak of a large ox, which they suppose to be the Behemoth in Job, that will then be prepared; and of Leviathan and his mate, which will then be dressed; and of a large fowl, called Ziz, of a monstrous bigness; and of old wine kept in the grape from the creation of the world, which will then be drank; and of the rich fruits of the garden of Eden, that will then be served up (g): such gross and carnal notions have they entertained of the world to come; and which this man seemed to have imbibed, and placed his happiness in.

16 Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

That is, Jesus, as the Syriac, Persian, and Ethiopic versions express it; he said to the man that was so affected with the happiness of such that shall share in the provisions of the Messiah's kingdom;

A certain man made a great supper] By which is meant not the Lord's supper, which was not as yet instituted; nor the supper of the Lamb, which will be at the end of the world; but the Gospel-dispensation, which was now taking place, and the provisions of it in the word and ordinances: and which is called a *supper*; because made in the end of the world, in the last days; and a *great* one, because of the maker of it, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; and the matter of it, a variety of rich provisions, a feast of fat things, an entertainment consisting of the greatest dainties, and most delightful food; and on account of the number of the guests invited, all people, every creature, to whom the outward ministration of the Gospel comes; and those who are properly guests that come, are a great number which no man can number; as well as because of the costs and charges of it to the maker, though it is all free to the guests; and likewise because of the circumstances of exceeding great.

(f) Midrash Ruth, fol. 33. 2. Bereshit Rabba, 5. 82, fol. 72. 4.

(g) See my notes on the Targum in Cant. viii. 2.

great joy and pleasure that attend it; to which may be added, the long duration of it, even from the first to the second coming of Christ.

And bade many] This first bidding more especially respects the Jews, who are said to be *many*, in reference to the promise made to Abraham, that his seed should be as the stars in the heavens, and as the sand of the sea; and to set off the magnificence of the feast; and in distinction from all the world, and every creature, which were afterwards put into the Gospel-commission: a foundation was laid for this supper in eternity, in the purposes, counsel, and covenant of God; and many prophecies concerning it were given out from the beginning; and sacrifices and ordinances were instituted, as emblematical of it.

17 And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

Sent either John the Baptist, the harbinger and forerunner of Christ, who declared that the kingdom of heaven, or the Gospel-dispensation, was at hand; and exhorted the people to believe in Christ that should come after him: or Christ himself, who is God's servant as man, of his choosing and appointing; and whom he sent in the fulness of time in the form of a servant, as the minister of the circumcision, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and to call sinners to repentance; or servant may be put for servants, since in *Matt. xxii. 3, 4.* mention is made of more; and so the Persian version here, which parable bears some likeness to this, if it is not the same; and may design the apostles of Christ, who were the servants of the most high God, and the ministers of Christ, who were first sent by him to preach the Gospel to the Jews, and to them only for a while;

To say to them that were bidden, Come] This call, or invitation, was not the internal call, which is a fruit of love, and by grace, and of mighty power; to special blessings, grace, and glory: and is irresistible, effectual, and unchangeable: but external, to outward ordinances; and is often slighted and neglected; and is sometimes of persons who are neither chosen, nor sanctified, nor saved:

For all things are now ready] The Syriac version adds, *for you*: righteousness, pardon of sin, peace, and reconciliation; sin put away by the sacrifice of Christ, redemption obtained, and life and salvation secured; which shews the perfection of the present dispensation, and the large provisions of the Gospel, to which nothing is, or can be brought to be added to them, or qualify for them.

18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have

bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

Or, "they all together," as the Vulgate Latin version, *in uno*, "in one, or at once," in *Jer. x. 8.* it is rendered *altogether*; and so the Ethiopic version, which adds, "with one voice;" but their words and language were not the same; their excuses are differently expressed. Some render *αὐτοὺς*, "from one hour," or the self-same hour; immediately, directly, as soon as ever they were bidden, they began to frame excuses; they at once agreed, as by common consent, to excuse themselves from coming.

The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, [or a field] and I must needs go and see it.] He ought to have seen it before he bought it; and however it was a very improper time at evening, at supper-time, as this was, to go and see a piece of ground; and at least it might have been put off till next morning; so that it was a mere excuse indeed.

I pray thee have me excused] From coming to the supper: these were the principal men among the Jews, the Pharisees and rulers among the people; who were rich and covetous, worldly men, seeking their own worldly advantage more than their spiritual and eternal welfare, or the interest of God and religion.

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

To plough the field with,

And I go to prove them] This also being at, or near evening, was an unsuitable time to go into the field with yokes of oxen to try them, how they would draw the plough, and work in the field; the morning would have been a much more proper time:

I pray thee have me excused] To the master of the feast: this man represents also the carnal and worldly Jews, who preferred temporal things before spiritual.

20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

And his pretence might be, that he had his own marriage-feast, and friends to attend, nor could he leave his wife directly; but his circumstances were such as made an invitation to a feast the more agreeable, and he might have brought his wife and friends along with him, who would have been as welcome as himself:

And therefore I cannot come] The Arabic version renders it, "therefore I will not go:" this man is more rustic and rude and than the former; he does not

not so much as desire to be excused; and represents such who are fond of their sensual lusts and pleasures, and are resolved to indulge them, and will not be taken off from them by any means whatever.

21 So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

Shewed him the several excuses which those that were bidden to the supper made. So the ministers of the Gospel come to God and Christ, and give an account of the success of their ministry, which is often with grief, and not with joy.

Then the master of the house being angry] As well he might, at their ingratitude to him, their slighting of his kindness, and the contempt they poured upon his entertainment. Christ resented the impenitence and unbelief of the Jews, who were favoured with his ministry and miracles; and looked upon them with anger, and was grieved because of the hardness of their hearts; threatened them with a sorer punishment, a more aggravated condemnation, and more intolerable torments, than other men.

And said to his servants] The apostles, when their commission was enlarged to preach to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem:

Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city] To the Jews, who lived under a civil government, under the law of Moses; though the meaner sort of them, the poor, and such as knew not the law in such sort as the scribes and Pharisees did, who rejected the counsel of God against themselves; and so are comparable to persons that lie about the streets, and live in lanes and alleys: and it may also regard the Jews that were scattered abroad in other places, and the proselytes to their religion among the Gentiles; to whom the Gospel was first preached, after it was rejected by the Jews at Jerusalem and in Judea:

And bring in hither the poor] Not in a literal, but in a mystical and spiritual sense; such as have no spiritual food to eat, but ashes, gravel, wind, and husks of carnal lusts and sins; nor any spiritual clothing, no righteousness, but what may be justly called *filthy rags*; nor money to buy either, but are in debt, owe ten thousand talents, and have nothing to pay; of which spiritual poverty some are sensible, and others are not.

And the maimed] Who are debilitated and enfeebled by sin; and so weak and strengthless, that

they are not able to keep the law of God; to atone for sin; to redeem themselves, or others, from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law; to begin and carry on a work of grace and holiness in them; or to do any thing that is spiritually good:

And the halt] Which is sometimes a character of persons that are in suspense about matters in religion, and know not which side to take; or who halt in religion, and falter and fail in the exercise of it; but here, of such who are in an incapacity of going or walking in a spiritual sense; as unto Christ, for life and salvation, without the drawings and influences of the Father's grace:

And the blind] Who are so, as to any saving knowledge of God in Christ; of Christ, and the way of righteousness, life, and salvation by him; of the plague of their own hearts, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the need of a Saviour; of the work of the Spirit of God upon their souls, and the necessity of it; and of the truths of the Gospel, in a spiritual and experimental way. In short, under these characters are represented natural and unconverted men, and the most vile, profane, and abandoned of them; which are sometimes, under the power of divine grace, accompanying the ministration of the Gospel, brought to Christ, and into his church. So *the blind and the lame*, in 2 Sam. v. 6, 8. are by the Targum on the place, explained of מְרִירִים מְרִירִים "lunners and wicked persons."

22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

The servant, after he had been out and brought in a large number of such as are before described, and he was directed to, and succeeded to the gathering of them in, said,

Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded] The apostles exactly observed the orders of their Lord and Master; they began to preach the Gospel at Jerusalem; and being drove from thence, they went and preached to the Jews of the dispersion, and to the proselytes among the Gentiles:

And yet there is room] That is, for the Gentiles, after God's elect, among the Jews, for that time, were gathered in: there was room provided for them in the heart and love of God from everlasting, and in electing grace; in the suretyship-engagements of Christ, and in the covenant of his grace; and they had a place in the redeeming grace of Christ, in time; and in the last commission he gave to his disciples; and there was now room for them in the church of God; and will be in the new Jerusalem, and in the heavenly glory.

23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled.

Said a second time; that since the Jews *put away the word of eternal life from them, and judged themselves unworthy of it*, by their contradicting and blaspheming it, he commanded his apostles to turn from them to the Gentiles; see *Acts* xiii. 45—47.

Go out into the highways and hedges] The *Perfic* version adds, "of the vineyards;" see *1 Chron.* iv. 23. and may in general design the mean, base, vile, and sinful state of the Gentiles; who might be said to be *in the highways*, because they were *without* the commonwealth and church of the Jews; were not admitted to civil conversation, nor to religious worship with them; and were left to walk on in their own ways, ways of their own devising and choosing, in which they delighted: they were not in God's highway, which is *a way of holiness*, *Isaiah* xxxv. 8. but in their own highways; either following the various sects of the Philosophers, which were vain and foolish; or going into different practices of idolatry, and walking in very sinful and vicious courses; and so were in the broad road and highway to destruction: and their being in, and under *the hedges*, may denote their state of separation from God; being without him, alienated from the life of him, and afar off from him; being *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise*, *Eph.* ii. 12. they were not in the gardens and inclosures, but under the hedges:

And compel them to come in] To the house of God, and church of Christ; to come and hear the word, and quit their former course of living, and attend the word and worship of God; and, upon an evidence of the truth of grace upon their souls, to come into a Gospel-church-state, and partake of all the privileges and ordinances in it; to which they are to be *compelled*, not by outward force, but by forcible words, by powerful arguments, and by the strength of persuasion; which expresses the nature of the Gospel ministry, which is to persuade *Japhet to dwell in the tents of Shem*; and the power that attends it by the divine Spirit; the case and condition of souls, who are generally *base* and backward, judging themselves unworthy; as also the earnest desire, and great liberality of Christ, the master of the feast, whose end in it is as follows:

That my house may be filled] With men, like a flock, and these with gifts and grace; with such as shall be saved, as with elect Jews, so with the fullness of Gentiles.

24 For I say unto you, That none of those

men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

I most solemnly affirm it, and even swear to it, nothing is more certain, or will be found more true;

That none of those men that were bidden] The impenitent and unbelieving Jews, the scribes and Pharisees, and the greater part of the nation; who first had the Gospel published to them, who are the *many* that were called, though *few* were chosen, and therefore came not; nor did, nor

Shall taste of my supper] Nor had they so much as a superficial knowledge of the Gospel, of the truths, blessings, promises, and ordinances of it; being given up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart; and from whom in a little while the Gospel was wholly taken; and is not yet afforded to them as a body; nor will till the latter day, when the veil shall be taken away, and *they shall turn to the Lord, and all Israel shall be saved*; but as for the first disbelievers and rejecters of Christ among the Jews, they died in their sins, and perished eternally.

25 ¶ And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,

Went from Galilee, as he journeyed from thence to Jerusalem; some for one thing, and some another; and all perhaps were in expectation of his setting up a temporal kingdom when he came there; and hoped they should share, more or less, in the worldly advantages of it: for the whole nation was big with such carnal notions of the Messiah. Jesus therefore, to draw off their minds from such views, and that they might not be disappointed, acquaints them, that if they would be his disciples, they must part with all that was near and dear to them; and prepare to suffer great hardships and difficulties for his name's sake: for it follows,

And he turned] Himself to the company that was behind:

And said unto them] With a grave and stern countenance, looking wistly at them, and in the most solemn manner delivered what is hereafter related:

26 If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

Come, not in a corporal, but in a spiritual way; nor barely to hear him preach; but so come, as that he believes in him, applies to him for grace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation; professes to be his, submits to his ordinances, and desires to be a disciple of his;

And hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple] Not that proper hatred of any, or of all these, is enjoined by Christ; for this would be contrary to the laws of God, to the first principles of nature, to all humanity, to the light of nature, to reason and divine revelation: but that these are not to be preferred to Christ, or loved more than he, as it is explained in *Matt. x. 37.* yea, these are to be neglected and forsaken, and turned from with indignation and resentment, when they stand in the way of the honour and interest of Christ, and dissuade from his service: such who would be accounted the disciples of Christ, should be ready to part with their dearest relations and friends, with the greatest enjoyment of life, and with life itself, when Christ calls for it; or otherwise they are not worthy to be called his disciples. The Ethiopic version inserts, *his house*, into the account.

27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

Bear all reproach, afflictions, persecutions, and death itself, cheerfully and patiently; the Ethiopic version renders it, “of his death the cross;” it signifies whatever is trying and disagreeable to flesh and blood:

And come after me] Bearing his cross; as Christ himself was about to do, and which doubtless he had in view;

Cannot be my disciple] He is not so in reality, nor does he deserve the name.

28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish it?

Taking up a profession of Christ and his Gospel, is like building a tower; which, as a tower, must be laid on a good foundation; not on carnal descent and parentage; nor on a sober and religious education; nor on a civil, moral life and conversation; nor on a bare knowledge of Gospel-truths, and a flash of affection for them, and the people of God: but upon Christ, the sure foundation; and on principles of grace formed by his Spirit in their hearts: and this, like a tower, is carried very high; not by professing high things, but by living on high amidst a profession; by having the *affections set on things above*; and by looking down with contempt on things below; and by looking to, and pressing after the prize of the high calling of God in Christ: the profession of some persons is very low; it arises from low principles, and proceeds on low views, aims, and ends; but where it is right, and well founded, it is like a tower, firm and steady, and is a fortress and bulwark against apostasy.

Now what person acting deliberately in such a case as this, and proceeding with intention and design,

Sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?] As every wise man would, who has any thoughts of building a tower, or any other edifice: and so must such that have an intention to take up a profession of religion, they should sit down and well consider of it: which does not imply, that persons should delay making a profession, on whom it is incumbent; but that this should be done with thoughtfulness, care, and prudence: it should be considered on what foundation a man is going to build; whether the work of grace is truly wrought upon his soul; what be the nature and use of Gospel-ordinances; with what views he takes up a profession, and submits to ordinances; what the church and minister are he intends to walk with; and what the charge and cost of a profession; for such a work is chargeable and costly, and should be thought of and considered, whether he is able to bear it: for he will be called to self-denial; and must expect to suffer the loss of the favour of carnal relations and friends; and to be exposed to the scorn and rage of the world: a cross must be took up and bore; and great grace and strength are requisite to all this.

29 Left haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,

After he has begun to build, has taken up a profession, has submitted to ordinances, and got into a church-state:

And is not able to finish it] A foundation may be laid, and the building may never be finished, because the foundation is not laid right; was it, it would continue, and the building go on, and at last be finished; though no man is able to finish it of himself, yet those hands which have laid the foundation, will raise up the superstructure, and compleat the whole building, through the power and efficacy of divine grace: but where there is a beginning, and which at first looks well, and there is no progress, but the work is dropped and left unfinished,

All that behold it, begin to mock] As follows;

30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

He set out well, he promised great things, and made a considerable bluster and stir, as if he would carry things at once to a very high pitch:

And was not able to finish] It was all noise and talk, and nothing else: falling off from a profession of religion, exposes men to contempt and scorn; such are not only cast out of churches with

disgrace, but are despised by men, by wicked men; and are a reproach, a proverb, and a taunt in all places; and even are mocked by devils too.

31 Or what king going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

Our Lord illustrates the same thing, the business of a profession, by another similitude, or parable; taking up a profession of religion, is like to two kings engaging in a war. The king on the one side, is the christian professor; true believers are kings, they have the apparel of kings, the royal robe of Christ's righteousness; they live like kings, at the table of the King of kings; have the attendance of kings, angels ministering unto them; have crowns and thrones as kings have, and greater than theirs; and have a kingdom of grace now, and are heirs of the kingdom of glory. The king on the other side, is the devil; who is the king and prince of the rest of the devils, and over the men of the world; a kingdom is ascribed to him, which is a kingdom of darkness; and he is said to be a great king, and is represented as proud, cruel, and tyrannical: now the christian professor's life is a warfare; he is engaged with many enemies; the corruptions of his own heart within, and the world without; and especially Satan, who is to be resisted, and by no means to be yielded to, though there is a great inequality between them: and therefore what man that engages in such a warfare,

Sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand, to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? And such a difference there is between the christian professor and the devil; the one is flesh and blood, the other a spirit; the one is raw and undisciplined, the other a veteran soldier; the one a stripling, and the other the strong man armed: their numbers are unequal; the people of Christ are few, and their force and strength in themselves small; and they have a large number of devils, and of the men of the world, and of the lusts of their own hearts, to grapple with; wherefore it is necessary to sit down and consult, not with flesh and blood, but with other christians; and chiefly, and above all, with God himself; what will be the charges of this warfare; the hardships to be endured; and in whose name and strength they are to engage; what weapons to take, and how to use them; and how to get knowledge of the designs, methods, and strength of the enemy, and take every advantage of him.

32 Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

Upon his march, with resolution to come up and give battle, though as yet at a distance:

He sendeth an ambassage] Or men, with an embassy to him:

And desireth conditions of peace] Greatly to his disadvantage and reproach: so to give out, and leave off fighting with sin, Satan, and the world, and make peace with them, is shameful and scandalous; but on the other hand, such who have engaged in this war, should pursue it with vigour and courage; considering that God is on their side; that Christ is the captain of their salvation; that the Spirit of God that is in them, is greater than he that is in the world; that angels encamp around them; that it is a good cause they are engaged in; that they have good weapons, the whole armour of God provided for them; are sure of victory, and shall at last enjoy the crown of life, righteousness and glory.

33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

Let him be ever so forward to follow me, to make a profession of me and of my Gospel, and to become a disciple of mine:

That forsaketh not all that he hath] When called to it, relations, friends, possessions, estates, and what not, which is an explanation of y. 26.

He cannot be my disciple] He is not in fact one, and is not worthy to be called one.

34 ¶ Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his flavour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

See the notes on *Matt. v. 13.* and *Mark x. 50.*

35 It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghil; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

For the manuring of land, when it has lost its flavour and spirit; otherwise it makes land fruitful, if too much is not used, and especially fixed salts have this use; though Pliny says (n), "Every place in which salt is found, it is barren and brings forth nothing."

Nor yet for the dunghil] To mix with dung, and help it, that it may be the more serviceable for the earth; and just such useless things are a mere external profession of religion, and professors of

(n) Nat. Hist. l. 31. c. 7.

of it, and ministers of the word, without the grace of God; they are of no use, but hurtful to the church and to the world. These phrases are left out in the Persic and Ethiopic versions:

But men cast it out] Into the streets, as entirely useless: and so such graceless professors and ministers are to be cast out of the churches of Christ now, and will be excluded the kingdom of heaven hereafter:

He that hath ears to hear, let him hear] This being a point of great importance and consequence; see the note on *Matt. xi. 15.*

CHAP. XV.

In this chapter the Pharisees murmur against Christ, and were offended at him, because he received sinners, §. 1, 2. Christ justifieth himself by the parable of a lost sheep, §. 3—7. of a lost piece of silver, §. 8—10. of a lost son, that had been a prodigal, but returned to his father's house, and was received with great joy, though his elder brother, like these scribes and Pharisees, were offended at it, §. 11—32.

THEN drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

Drew near to Jesus, as the Persic and Ethiopic versions express it: this was on the sabbath-day, and either when he was in the Pharisee's house, where he was invited to dinner, chapter xiv. 1. or rather, when he came out of it; when the multitude, who could not come near him whilst there, took the opportunity of gathering about him; even

All the publicans and sinners] Whom the Pharisee would not admit into his house, it being contrary to their traditions to eat, and drink, and converse with persons of such an infamous character; see the note on *Matt. ix. 10, 11.* The word *all* is omitted in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions; but the Arabic version has it, and the Greek copies; and signifies, that there were a very large number of them, even all that were in that place, and in the adjacent cities and towns, that got together

For to hear him] Or *from him*, as the Arabic version; “or doctrine from him,” as the Persic version adds: these having heard much of him; and it may be, might be under some remorse of conscience on account of their vicious lives, came to hear him preach.

2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

When they saw the easy access these wicked men had to Christ; and that he stopped and staid with

them, and very freely imparted instructions to them:

Saying, this man receiveth sinners] The Persic version reads, “publicans and sinners,” as in the preceding verse: the word *man* is not in the original text, it is only *this*; which is to be understood not by way of eminence, as this great person, this prophet, this master in Israel; but by way of diminution and reproach, *this fellow*; as it is sometimes supplied: the word *man* may be very rightly inserted, for they took him to be a mere man; though it is certain he was more than a man, even the true and mighty God; and therefore was able to save those sinners that came to him: and great condescension and grace did he show in receiving them who were sinners, not only by nature, but by practice; and not merely guilty of common infirmities, but were notorious sinners, covetous, extortioners, oppressors of the poor, and very debauched persons; and such as these Christ receives: hence no man should be discouraged from coming to Christ, on account of sin; all that do come to him, should come as sinners, for he receives them as such; nor does he receive any for any worthiness there is in them: these persons he received first at his Father's hand, as he did all the elect, as his portion, and to be preserved and saved by him; with all gifts, grace, blessings, and promises for them; and in consequence of this, he receives them upon their coming to him as sinners, into his open love and affection, into his arms; which denotes communion and protection; into his house and family, and not only to hear him preach, or preached, but to converse and eat with him at his table, and even to live by faith upon him; and when he has freed them from all their sins, he will receive them to himself in glory. And there is the greatest reason imaginable to believe, that Christ still does and will receive sinners; since he came to save the chief of sinners; and has bore their sins, and died for them; and now makes intercession for transgressors; and by the ministers of the word calls sinners to repentance.

And eateth with them] As he did in the houses of Matthew the publican, and of Zaccheus; see *Matt. ix. 10. Luke xix. 7.* each of which occasioned great murmurings among the Pharisees; and who therefore traduced him as a friend of publicans and sinners; and he is indeed so in the best sense: and not only did he eat with them corporally, but in a spiritual sense, as he still does; admitting them into his house to eat of the provisions of it, to live on him the bread of life, to sup with him, and he with them; and feeding and delighting himself in the exercise of those graces, which he himself is the donor and author of, in them.

3 ¶ And:

3 ¶ And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

To the Pharisees, for their conviction and confutation; and to the publicans and sinners for their encouragement; and in vindication of himself; and not only this, but the other two, concerning the lost piece of money, and the prodigal son, which were said at this time, and on the same occasion; saying, as follows,

4 What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

Having a flock of sheep, consisting of such a number; see the note on *Matthew* xviii. 12.

If he lose one of them] By straying from the flock, *Doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness*]

Or upon the common where they were feeding,

And go after that which is lost, until he find it?]

By which parable Christ vindicates his conduct in conversing with sinners, and neglecting the scribes and Pharisees; for if it was right for an owner of an hundred sheep, when he had lost one of them, to leave all the rest, and go in search after that one till he had found it; then it was right in Christ to do what he did. The Jewish nation seems to be designed by *the hundred sheep*, who are frequently represented as *a flock of sheep*, Psalm lxxvii. 20. and c. 3. Ezek. xxxiv. 2, 3, 30, 31. which are divided into ninety-nine, and one: for by *the ninety and nine* left in the wilderness, cannot be meant angels, as some have thought; for angels are never called *sheep*; and besides, the *one lost sheep* is of the same kind with the ninety and nine; and, according to this sense, must design an angel, or angels likewise; whereas none of the fallen angels are sought up, recovered, and saved. Moreover, when Christ became incarnate, he did not leave the angels; they accompanied and attended him in his state of humiliation; and much less in a wilderness, and still less can heaven be so called; to which may be added, that the angels in heaven are distinguished from the ninety-nine, as well as from the one lost sheep in *Mat.* 7, 10. nor can elect men be designed by them, who are already called by grace, whether they be in heaven or on earth; for though they in heaven are *the spirits of just men made perfect*, and are in a state that need no repentance, yet it cannot be said of them, that they went not astray, as in *Matt.* xviii. 13. for all God's people have been like sheep going astray, and were as such considered when Christ was here on earth, and bore their sins; and especially those could never be said to be left

in a wilderness: nor the saints on earth; for though they are just persons, being justified by the righteousness of Christ, yet they daily need repentance: nor can it be said of them that they went not astray, nor are they left by Christ in the wilderness of this world; nor can there be more joy in heaven over one repenting sinner, than over these; but the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees, that murmured at our Lord's receiving sinners, are meant. These were sheep, at least were in sheep's clothing; they were nominal professors, and belonged to the Jewish fold, or national church-state; their number was as ninety-nine to one; which is not to be taken strictly, as though only one in a hundred of them were saved; but it shows, that the greater part of the Jews were of this sort. The dividing of an hundred after this manner, into ninety-nine and one, was usual with the Jews (i). The *one lost sheep* in this parable, though it may include all the elect of God, and be accommodated to a single elect sinner, yet chiefly respects the chosen of God among the Jews; which were very few, a remnant according to the election of grace; and which lay among the profane part of them, the publicans and sinners; who are particularly pointed out here, as appears from the context: these are called *sheep*, even before conversion; not because they had the agreeable properties of sheep, for they were all the reverse; nor could some things be said of them before as after, as, that they heard the voice of Christ, and followed him; nor because they were unprejudiced against, and predisposed to receive the Gospel: but they are so called by anticipation, because they would be so; or rather in virtue of electing grace, by which they were chosen, and separated from others, and made the care and charge of Christ the great shepherd, and were the sheep of his hand: these are represented as going astray from the shepherd, and from the fold, and out of the right way; and who being, like sheep, stupid and insensible of their danger, wander about, and never return of themselves till they are returned to, and by the great shepherd and bishop of souls. And in their unregenerate estate they are lost sheep: not irretrievably and eternally lost, as the world's goats; for though they are lost in Adam, yet not in Christ; and though lost in themselves, so as there is no possibility of ever recovering and saving themselves; yet as they were preserved in Christ, they are recovered and saved by him; who is the owner and proprietor of the whole flock, of all the *hundred sheep*, of the whole body of the Jewish nation; who were his by creation, and by being

(i) *Mishn. Pesech.* c. 4. §. 1, 2. *T. Hieros. Sabbat.* fol. 14. 3. *Vajikra Rabba.* §. 16. fol. 158. 4. *T. Bab. Bava Metzia.* fol. 107. 2. *Vajikra Rabba.* §. 27. fol. 168. 3.

being chosen from, and above all other people; and were distinguished by peculiar favours, had the shekinah, and presence of God among them, and his worship, word, and ordinances. Christ was peculiarly promised to them, and was born of them; and was a minister of the circumcision, being sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel: though the ninety and nine were not his sheep in the most peculiar sense, or in such sense as the one lost sheep, which were his by his Father's gift, as all the elect are; hence he knows them, calls them, and receives them, and keeps them, and highly values them: he had them, they were put into his hands, he took the care and charge of them, he undertook to bring them in, to feed them, to die for them, and save them; and they are his by purchase; and he asserts his right to them, by calling them by his grace, and will distinguish them as his own at the last day: and now, because of the different interest Christ has in the ninety and nine and the one, different regards are had to them; the ninety and nine, the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees, he leaves in the wilderness, in a state of unregeneracy; so called, because in those that are in such a state, nothing is sown or planted, what grows there is natural; there is no seed of grace, no plants of pleasure, no engrafted word, no fruits of righteousness, nothing but thorns and briars of sins and corruptions: and also because of the want of provisions; no bread of life, nor water of life; no sincere milk of the word, no breasts of consolation; nothing but husks, and bread of deceit: and it is like a wilderness, because of solitariness; such as are in this state, are alone, without God, and Christ, and the blessed Spirit; they are aliens from the people of God, and converse with none but wicked men, comparable to savage beasts of the desert: moreover, it may be so called, because of the various perplexing cross ways in it; the ways of sin are many, and crooked, and dark; and indeed, such are the religious ways of unregenerate men: to which may be added, that it bears this name because of the danger of it; for such as are in it, are exposed to beasts of prey, particularly to Satan, the red dragon, and roaring lion; and to pits, gins, and snares, to hell-fire, destruction, and misery. Christ's leaving persons in such a state, supposes they were in it antecedent to their being left: man was originally placed in a garden; sinning against God, he forfeited his happy situation, and was drove out from it; and wandering from God, he fell into this wilderness-state. Christ does not lead any into it, but leaves them in it; which is done in consequence of his Father's act of preterition, or passing them by when he chose others; and this he does, when he does not call them by his grace, as he does others; does not manure, till

and cultivate them, as he does his own husbandry and vines; makes no provision of food and pasture for them; leaves them to themselves, and without the enjoyment of himself, to follow their own ways, without a guide; and to beasts of prey, without a guard. Now the persons he thus leaves are such whom the Father has left out in his choice and covenant; and who left Christ, rejected and despised him; and were persons that made great pretensions to religion, were righteous in their own eyes, and in their own account never went astray, nor needed repentance. On the other hand, the one lost sheep, the chosen of God among publicans and sinners, a special regard is had to them: Christ goes after that which is lost, until he find it; not after all mankind; for though they are all lost, yet they are not all redeemed by Christ; nor are they made sensible of their lost condition; nor effectually called by grace; nor brought home: nor does he go after the ninety-nine, for Christ came not to call the righteous; though these were lost, and irretrievably too, yet they were not sensible of their condition: but God's elect among the Jews are the persons here said to be lost; to shew their common condition with the rest of mankind; to express the love of Christ towards them the more; and to magnify the riches of his grace in their salvation: these he went after in redemption, he came forth from his Father, and came down from heaven for their sakes; he died to gather them together, and represented them all in his sufferings and death; he bore all their sins, and made reconciliation for them, and procured the full pardon of them; he satisfied the law and justice of God, wrought out an everlasting righteousness, and obtained eternal redemption, and a complete salvation for them: and he went after them in effectual vocation. Before conversion an elect sinner is without Christ, and goes astray from him; nor does he ever come to Christ till Christ comes after him, and lays hold upon him; he sends his ministers after such, and his Spirit into them, and comes himself, and takes possession of them. To find his lost sheep by redeeming grace he came into this world, a world of wickedness, sorrow and trouble, of cruelty, and barbarity; and the reason of his coming here was, because his sheep were here; he came after them, and on their account: and to find them by effectual calling, he still comes into the world by his word and Spirit: God's elect are in the world, Christ sends his Gospel into it, and by his Spirit and grace comes and separates them from the men of it. In Matthew xviii. 12. he is said to go into the mountains after his lost sheep; which, with respect to redemption, may denote the difficulties that lay in the way of it; such as his

his incarnation, obedience, sufferings, and death, and the many enemies he had to grapple with and subdue; and with respect to calling-grace, may express the state and condition God's elect are in by nature, being on the mountains of sin, of Sinai, of the law, and of their own righteousness. Now Christ goes after them *till he finds them*; which denotes continuance, his indefatigable industry and diligence, his resolution and courage, and his success. The reasons why he thus goes after them, are not their number, for they are the fewest of all; nor their nature, which is no better than others; nor any previous dispositions or good characters, for those designed here were publicans and sinners; nor any future improvements and service by them, for they were the base and foolish things of this world; nor because near at hand, and so easily looked up, for they were afar off: but because of his love to them, and the relation between them as shepherd and sheep; and because of his Father's will, and his own obligation by covenant; and because of his own interest and glory.

5 And when he hath found *it*, he layeth *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing.

Found it in a sad plight and condition: so Christ finds his sheep in a most desolate one, in a pit, in the mire and clay of nature; in the paw of the roaring lion, Satan; helpless, hopeless, wretched, miserable, and naked; and not only starving, famishing, and dying, but even dead in trespasses and sins: and finding them with respect to redemption, designs his procuring eternal salvation for them; and with regard to vocation, his laying hold upon them by his Spirit and grace, and bringing them to a sense of themselves, and to the knowledge of himself. There are several things which Christ does to his sheep when he has found them, which are not here expressed, but understood: finding them dead in sin, he speaks life into them; he calls them by name, and asserts his property in them; he takes them out of the pit of nature; he rescues them out of the hands of Satan; he washes them from their filthiness, and heals all their diseases; he feeds and refreshes them; he covers them with his robe of righteousness; he beautifies and adorns them, and brings them home in the manner after described:

He layeth it on his shoulders] He does not put them on their own legs to go alone; nor does he lead them, and much less drive them before him; but he takes them up in his arms, and lays them on his shoulders: which shows the passiveness of men in conversion, and their weakness and impotency to any thing that is spiritually good of themselves; they cannot think a good thought, nor do a good action, and still less begin and carry on

the work of grace in their hearts; as also the strength of Christ in bearing and carrying them, as he does, through all afflictions, temptations, and difficulties, safe to glory; and likewise his great love and affection for them; he loved them before the world began, and he shewed it in dying for them, and manifests it to them, when he calls them by his grace: and this also expresses the safety of his sheep; for being on him, they are in no danger from the law and justice of God; nor from Satan, or any other enemy; nor of a final and total falling away: and moreover this signifies the spiritual ease and rest which such have in Christ: the manner in which Christ the shepherd carries them, having found them, and laid them on his shoulders, is *rejoicing*; not upbraiding them with going astray; nor complaining of, or groaning under the burden; but rejoicing in a kind of triumph, and carrying them as a trophy of victory, and a spoil obtained.

6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

The house or home to which Christ comes, and brings thither his lost sheep on his shoulders when found, is either the church of God, which is Christ's house and home, and into which he himself comes; it is his by gift and purchase, and which he has built, and here comes and dwells as a Son over it, as King in it, and as Priest and Prophet there, and as the Master of it: and thither he brings his people when he has called them by his grace, where they have a good fold and green pastures, and where they delight to be. Or else heaven is this home, which is *an house of God's building, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*; and which is Christ's Father's house, and his own house and home, and also the saints house and home, whither they are all brought by Christ; for they cannot go there alone and of themselves: they are brought by the power of divine grace, as trophies of it, as to their own home; and such that Christ takes into his arms, and on his shoulders, he never drops them till he has brought them safe to heaven:

He calleth together his friends and neighbours] The friends of Christ are the saints, so called, because of their share in his friendship to them; shown by his becoming a surety for them; by his assuming their nature, and dying in their room and stead; by his paying their debts, and redeeming their persons; by his intercession for them, and preparing a place for them in his Father's house; by supplying all their wants, and by his kind and comfortable visits to them; by his free and familiar

him converses with them, and by unfolding his secrets, and giving wholesome advice and counsel to them: as also on account of their bearing and shewing friendship to him; as by their great affection to his person; by their attachment to his cause and interest; by their strict regard to his Gospel, and the truths of it; and by their diligent observance of his commands and ordinances; and by their regard to his people, and disregard to his enemies. And these are also Christ's neighbours, they dwell near to each other; he dwells in them, and they in him; they love each other as themselves, and perform every office cheerfully in love to one another. Moreover, the angels may be meant by the friends and neighbours of Christ, as may be collected from *ſ. 10.* these are his friends whom he has shown himself friendly to, in the confirmation of them in the state in which they were created; in the choice of them to eternal happiness; and in being an head of protection to them; as well as of eminence over them; and these are friendly to him; as they were at his incarnation, and when tempted in the wilderness, and when in an agony in the garden, and at his resurrection and ascension; and will attend him at his second coming: and they are friendly to his; are ministering spirits to them, rejoice at their conversion, encamp about them in life, and at death carry their departed souls to heaven: and these are likewise his neighbours; their habitation is in heaven where he is, and they always behold the face of his Father there, and will come along with him when he appears a second time. Now saints are called together to hear what great things Christ has done for poor sinners when he brings them to Zion; and angels are also made acquainted with their conversion; and both saints and angels will be called together, when the sheep of Christ shall be brought home to glory.

Saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost. The joy of Christ and his friends is mutual on this occasion; Christ rejoices himself, and his friends with him: he rejoiced in his people from everlasting; they were the objects of his Father's love, and of his own; and he took delight in them, as he saw them in the glass of his Father's purposes, as they were chosen in him, and given to him; and this joy in them still continued, notwithstanding their fall in Adam, and their own actual sins and transgressions; but whereas they were lost in the fall, and by their own sins, there were some new expressions of joy upon Christ's finding them in redemption: it was with the utmost pleasure he engaged in that work, and with the greatest readiness did he come into the world to do it, and he went through it with great delight; he was, as it were, straitened

until it was accomplished; the consideration of it made him easy under the apprehensions of what he was to endure, and supported him under his most dolorous sufferings. His rising again from the dead as the representative of his people, filled him with gladness, and he ascended to heaven in a triumph: but yet still these persons, though redeemed, are in a lost estate with respect to themselves; wherefore in conversion there are fresh breakings forth of joy in Christ; for that is the day of his open espousals to them, and so the day of the gladness of his heart, when he sees of the travail of his soul with satisfaction; and large expressions of love are made to him; and his people are brought to some conformity to him, and communion with him, but still they are not yet at home; wherefore with joy he brings them into his church, which is his house, and their home, where he rejoices over them to do them good; and will express still more joy in the new Jerusalem church-state; and still more when he shall have brought them to glory, and have presented them to himself, and to his Father, which will be done with exceeding joy. Christ's friends and neighbours, his saints and people, also rejoice at the conversion of a sinner; because the glory of the Father, Son, and Spirit, is displayed therein; and because Satan has lost his prey, and Christ has got a new subject; and because of the grace of God bestowed upon the sinner, and the addition that is made to their number; particularly this is matter of joy to the ministers of the Gospel; and angels also rejoice at it, because of the glory of God that is advanced thereby.

7 I lay unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

Joy shall be in the church below, and among the members of it; which is sometimes called heaven, especially in the book of the Revelation; or in heaven above, and among the angels there; see *ſ. 10.*

Over one sinner that repenteth. For the joy in heaven, is not over sinners, as such; for as such, they are not grateful to God, nor to Christ, nor to the angels, nor to saints; only sinners delight in each other, as such; but as repenting sinners, who are truly so; and these are not such who only legally and outwardly repent; nor all that declare a sense of sin; or that are externally sorry for it; or are terrified about it, and shed tears on account of it; or that cease from grosser sins of life, and outwardly reform: but such who repent in an evangelical way; who are turned to God, and

are instructed by his Spirit; who believe in Christ, and have views, at least hopes, of pardon through his blood; and have the love of God and Christ shed abroad in their hearts; from whence arise a true sight and sense of sin, a godly sorrow for it, an hearty loathing of it, shame on account of it, an ingenuous confession, and a real forsaking of it. Now the reason why there is joy in heaven over such persons is, because without such a repentance, they must perish; and by this they appear to be openly in a state of grace; and become proper subjects of the ordinances of Christ; and this repentance is unto life and salvation; or these are inseparably connected with it: and this joy is abundantly

More than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance] By whom are meant, either such who are really righteous persons; not naturally and of themselves, nor legally by the deeds of the law, but by the imputation of Christ's righteousness to them: and who need no repentance to be added to their righteousness, it being perfect of itself; nor the grace and principle of repentance, because they have it, and it cannot be lost; nor change of life and manners, which is not to be seen in such: and the more joy over repenting sinners, than over these is, because the salvation of the one is before certain to them, and the other is unexpected: but to this sense it may be objected, that saints, even righteous persons, need frequent conversions, and the continual exercise of the grace of repentance; nor does it seem feasible, that there should be more joy over a repenting sinner, than over one whole life, through grace, is a series of righteousness: rather therefore, such who seem to be just, or are so in their own opinion, are here meant; for only such sort of righteous persons and repenting sinners, are opposed to each other, as in *Matt. ix. 13.* moreover, the occasion and scope of the parable, determines this to be the sense; the scribes and Pharisees, that murmured at Christ's receiving sinners, are the *ninety and nine just persons*, who were only outwardly righteous before men, and trusted in themselves that they were righteous, perfectly righteous, and without sin, and so stood in no need of repentance for it; now there is more joy in heaven over one repenting sinner, than over all these: hence learn, that a self-righteous person, is an impenitent one; that a repenting sinner, is more regarded in heaven, than a self-righteous man. Our Lord here seems to have regard to a conceit of the Jews, who distinguish between penitents that were allowed to be righteous, and such who never were guilty of any notorious crime, and so were perfectly righteous, and needed no repentance, and were preferred to penitent sinners: some

of them say (*k*), that "The prophets did not prophesy (good things and comforts) but, *חשובה*, "to penitents;" but as for, *נמורים*, "the perfect righteous," to them belongs that *eye hath not seen, O God, besides thee.*—But R. Abhu says, The place in which penitents stand, the perfect righteous do not stand." Though Maimonides seems (*l*) to understand this, as if it gave the preference to penitents; his words are these. —The wise men say, the place where penitents stand, the perfect righteous cannot stand; which is as if it was said, their degree or excellency is greater than those who never sinned, because they have subdued their imagination more than they." However, these instances, with others that might be produced, shew, that the Jews had a notion of some men's being perfectly righteous and without sin; which they oppose to penitent sinners; and which our Lord here designs, and seems to describe in their own language, and serves to confirm the sense given; see the note on *Heb. xii. 23.*

8 ¶ Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it?

Or ten drachmas; a drachma was the fourth part of a shekel, and of the same value with a Roman penny; and was worth of our money seven pence halfpenny, so that the ten pieces amounted to six shillings and three pence. The Ethiopic version renders it, *ten rings*. This parable is delivered with the same view as the former; the scope and design of them are alike, being occasioned by the same circumstance, only the passiveness of a sinner in conversion is here more fully signified; who can contribute no more to the first act of conversion, which is purely God's work, than a lost piece of silver to its being found: by the *ten pieces of silver* are designed all the Jews, or the whole body of that people; as they were before signified by the hundred sheep; they having been God's peculiar treasure, though they were now in general become reprobate silver: and by the *woman*, the proprietor of them, is meant Christ; and in what sense he was the owner of them, has been shewn on *y. 4.* The *nine pieces* design the scribes and Pharisees; and the one lost piece, expressed in the next clause,

If she lose one piece] Intends the elect among the Jews, and who chiefly consisted of publicans and sinners;

(*k*) T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 99. 1.

(*l*) Hilchot Teshuba, c. 7. §. 4. Vid. Kimchi in Isa, lvi, 19. & Jarchi in Isa, xlv, 5, & Zohar in Lev, fol. 7. 2.

sinners; and the regard had to these, is signified by the following expressions,

Doth not light a candle] By which is meant, not the light of nature or reason in man; for though this is called a *candle*, and is of Christ's lighting, yet not that by which he looks up his lost people, for this is become very dim: and though by it men may know there is a God, and the difference between moral good and evil, by it they cannot come at the knowledge of things spiritual; as of God in Christ, of the sin of nature, and of the plague of the heart; nor of the way of salvation by Christ, nor of the work of the Spirit, and the nature and need of it; nor of the scriptures of truth, and of the doctrines of the Gospel, nor of the things of another world. Neither is the law of Moses intended; for though there was light by it into the knowledge of sin, yet not clear; and though the ceremonial law was a shadow of Christ, and did give some instructions about him, and the doctrines of the Gospel, and blessings of grace, yet but very obscure hints: but by this candle is meant the Gospel itself; which, like a candle, is lighted up in the evening of the world; and may be removed, as it sometimes is, from place to place; and where it is set and blessed, it gives light, and is useful both to work and walk by: it does not always burn alike clear, nor is always held forth in the same purity; and it will give the greatest light at last, as a candle does, even at the end of the world: now Christ is the lighter of this, and from him it has all its light, who is the maker of it; he keeps it light, and by it he looks up and finds out his elect ones; though this is not a direction to him, who perfectly knows who they are, and where they be, but is rather a light to them, that they may know and find him:

And sweep the house] Which phrase sometimes designs outward reformation, as in *Matt. xii. 44.* and sometimes God's judgments upon a people, as in *Isa. xiv. 23.* but here the preaching of the Gospel, and the power that goes along with it, to the effectual vocation of the elect. The *house* in which Christ's lost piece of silver, or his chosen ones were, may design the nation of the Jews, who are often called *the house of Israel*; this was a house of God's building and choosing, and where he dwelt: and among these people for a long time God's elect lay, though all of them were not so; and about this time the Lord was about to break up house-keeping with them; yet as there were some few among them, that were to be looked up and called, therefore this house must be swept, as it was by the ministry of John the Baptist, by Christ himself, and by his apostles: and this suggests what must be the state and condition of God's elect, being in

this house, before it was swept, and they found out; they were out of sight, in great obscurity and darkness, with a deal of rubbish and dirt upon them, and pollution in them; and impotent to that which is good, and to their own recovery, and yet capable of being recovered: and this phrase hints at the power and efficacy of divine grace, that goes along with the word, in looking up and finding lost sinners; in enlightening their dark minds, quickening them, being dead in sin; taking away their stony hearts, regenerating them, entrusting the divine image upon them, removing every thing from them they trusted in, and working faith in them, to look to and believe in Christ. And as in sweeping of an house, a great stir is made, a dust raised, and things are moved out of their place; so by the preaching of the Gospel, an uproar is made in the sinner himself; in his conscience, which is filled with a horrible sight of sin; which is very loathsome, and causes uneasy reflections, fills with shame and confusion, and greatly burdens and distresses, and with the terrors of the law, and with dreadful apprehensions of hell and damnation; in his will there is a reluctancy to part with sinful lusts and pleasures, with sinful companions, and with his own righteousness, and to be saved by Christ alone, and to serve him, and bear his cross; and in his understanding, things appear in a different light than they before did; and great stir and opposition is made by Satan, to hinder the preaching of the Gospel, as much as in him lies, and persons from coming to hear it; and if they do, he endeavours to hinder, by catching it from them, or diverting them from that; by insinuating, it is either too soon or too late, to mind religion; or that sin is either so great that it cannot be forgiven, or so trivial, that a few prayers, tears, alms-deeds, &c. will make amends for it; by distressing them about their election, or about the willingness of Christ to save them; or by stirring up others to dissuade and discourage them. Moreover, when the Gospel is preached in purity and with power, and souls are converted, there is a great stir and uproar in the world; and among the men of it; because the doctrines of it are foolishness, and strange things to them; and oppose their sense of things, and strip them of what is thought valuable; and men are hereby distinguished from them, and taken from among them, and there is also a stir and an uproar made by it among carnal professors of religion, as there was at this time among the scribes and Pharisees; and all this bustle is made for the sake of a single piece of money:

And seek diligently till she find it?] Not only a light is set up, an hand of power put forth in using the besom, but a quick sharp eye, looks out for the piece of silver: this diligent seeking and find-

ing,

ing, are to be understood not of the grace of Christ in redemption; nor of his restoring backsliders; but of his converting sinners, through the preaching of the Gospel, both in his own person and by his ministers, his Spirit making their ministrations effectual: the diligence, care, and circumspection of Christ, to find out lost sinners, while the Gospel is preaching, are here signified: it is not the preacher that looks out for them, though he that is a faithful minister of the word, performs his office diligently and carefully, and he desires nothing more earnestly than the conversion of sinners; but then he knows not who are, and who are not the elect of God, and is ignorant of what Christ is doing, whilst he is preaching: Christ's eye is upon his lost piece; he perfectly knows the persons of the elect, as they are his Father's choice, and his gift to him; he knew them in the council of peace, and covenant of grace, in the fall of Adam, and their natural estate; he knows the places where they all are, and the time when they are to be converted; and distinguishes them amidst all the filth that attends them, and the crowd among which they are; and he continues seeking till he finds them; which shews the perpetuity of the Gospel ministry, the indefatigableness of Christ, and his sure and certain success: the reasons of all this care and diligence, are his love to them, his propriety in them, his Father's will, and his own engagement; and because they must be for ever lost did he not seek after them.

9 And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.

See the note on *ψ. 6.* A parable somewhat like to this the Jews (*m*) have on those words in *Proverbs* ii. 4. *If thou seekest her as silver, &c.* "It is like to a man that has lost a *shekel*, (a piece of money) or beryl rings, within his house; he lights up many lamps and many candles, until he lights on them; and lo, these things much more."

10 Likewise I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

As before in *ψ. 7.*

There is joy in the presence of the angels of God] Who are the friends and neighbours of Christ; see the note on *ψ. 6.*

Over one sinner that repenteth] Which they have knowledge of, either by immediate revelation from God, or by observation in the church where they attend; the reason of this joy is, because there is one rescued out of the hands of Satan and

his angels, between whom and them there is an implacable enmity; and because another subject is added to Christ's kingdom, and by which it is enlarged, the prosperity of which they greatly desire; and because another heir is born in that family to which they belong, and they have another social worshipper with them: and this joy is said to be in the presence of them; and so may design the joy of others, as of Father, Son, and Spirit, which is in their sight and knowledge; and also the joy there is among themselves.

11 ¶ And he said, A certain man had two sons:

The Syriac and Persic versions read, "and Jesus said again," he added another parable to the two former, at the same time, of the same import, with the same view, and on the same occasion; setting forth the different characters of the scribes and Pharisees, and of the publicans and sinners; and what little reason the one had to murmur at his conversation with the other:

A certain man had two sons] By the certain man is meant, God the Father: God indeed is not a man, nor is he to be represented by any human image; but inasmuch as man is the image of God, God is sometimes compared to man, and is called a man of war, an husbandman, &c. which no ways contradicts his being a Spirit; and true it is, that the second person only assumed human nature, and therefore, whenever a divine person is spoken of as man, Christ is commonly intended; but though the Father never appeared in an human form, yet he seems here to be designed; because the character of a Father, and having sons, more properly belong to him; and the reception of sinners, and the forgiveness of them for Christ's sake, agree with him; and besides, Christ is distinguished from the Father in this parable; and he and his blessings of grace are signified by other things; by the two sons are meant, not angels and men, as that angels are the elder, and men the younger son; for though angels may be called the sons of God, and may be said to be elder than men, with respect to creation; and good angels may be said to have been ever with God, and always serving him, and never sinned against him; yet they are never called the brethren of men, nor men their brethren; and besides, are never angry at the return and reception of repenting sinners; for this would be to represent them just the reverse of what they are said to be in the preceding verse: nor are the Jews and Gentiles here intended, which is the more received and general sense of the parable: those who go this way, suppose the Jews to be the elder brother; and indeed they were so, with respect to external privileges; and were with God, being his household and family; all that he had

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was theirs, that was external; and the character of the elder brother, throughout the parable, agrees with the far greater part of that nation; and it is certain, that they did resent the calling of the Gentiles: and these suppose the Gentiles to be the younger brother, who indeed were brought into a church-state later than the Jews; and might be said to be afar off, in a far country, and to have spent their substance in idolatry and wickedness; to have been in the utmost distress, and in the most deplorable condition: but to this sense it may be objected, that the Gospel was not as yet preached to the Gentiles; nor were they brought to repentance; nor were they openly received into the divine favour; nor as yet had the Jews murmured at, and resented the kindness of God to them: rather standing and fallen professors, may be designed; since the former are very apt to carry it toward the latter, in like manner as the elder brother is represented in this parable, as carrying himself towards the younger: but the true sense, and which the context and occasion of the parable at once determine, is, that by the *elder son* are meant, the scribes and Pharisees, and self-righteous persons, among the Jews; and by the *younger*, the publicans and sinners, among the same people; as it is easy to observe, the same are meant by the *two sons* in the parable in *Matt. xxi. 28—32*. Now these are called the sons of God, because the Jews in general were so by national adoption; and the self-righteous Pharisees looked upon themselves as the children of God, and favourites of heaven, in a special sense; and God's elect among them, even those that lay among publicans and sinners, were truly so, and that before conversion; for they were not only predestinated to the adoption of children, but were really taken into the relation of children, in the covenant of grace; and as such were given to Christ, and considered by him, when he assumed their nature, and died for them; and are so antecedent to the spirit of adoption, who is sent to witness their sonship to them; and which is consistent with their being children of wrath, as the descendents of Adam, and their being the children of God openly and manifestatively, by faith in Christ Jesus.

12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

God's chosen ones among the publicans and sinners, are fitly signified by the *younger son*, since man, as a sinner, is younger than man as righteous; and since there are instances of God's choice of the younger before the elder, as Jacob before Esau, &c. and the characters and conduct of young

men, agree with God's elect in a state of nature; who are imprudent and ignorant, without any knowledge of divine and spiritual things, and of themselves, their state and condition; and of Christ, and salvation by him; and yet are conceited of themselves; and fancy themselves very wise and knowing, and capable of acting for themselves, independent, and without any assistance or advice; do not care to be under restraints, withdraw from all yokes, and break all bands asunder; and so become children of disobedience, prone to every vice, and servants and slaves to every lust; by which they are deceived, and in which they take a great deal of imaginary pleasure; and are often envious and spiteful, and live in malice, *bateful, and hating one another*: the request made by this younger son, is to his father; to God, who was his Father by creation, by providential care, and by national adoption, and by special grace; though as yet he knew it not, nor could he call him so in faith: many call God Father, who should not, and many that should, do not: the request follows;

Rather, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me] This portion may be considered, either as internal or external; as internal, and such who think the Gentiles are meant by the younger son, understand it of the light of nature, and of natural gifts and talents. The ancients generally interpret it of man's free-will: it may intend natural knowledge in general, to which there is in man a natural desire, and in which he is self-sufficient: or rather as external, such as the outward blessings of life, food, raiment, health, &c. the honours, pleasures, and riches of the world: the good things of this world belonged to men by right of creation, and according to the laws and dues of it, but have been all forfeited by the sin of man; and yet this is a portion, which, in the apprehensions of men, of right belongs to them; and which suits their nature, which is carnal and worldly:

And he divided unto them his living] Natural gifts, external privileges, and worldly good things; which of all men in the earth the Jewish nation shared; see *Psal. cxv. 16.* and *cvi. 15.*

13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

All that his Father had divided to him, all his goods and substance: as soon as a man has any internal substance, any considerable degree of natural knowledge, he immediately sets out from God, and employs it against him; in reasoning against him; against his being, his works, his providence, his purposes, his revelation, and will; as soon as a man has

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the exercise of his reason, as soon as he can think and speak, nay, as soon as he is born, *he goes astray from God, speaking lies*; and as soon as a wicked man has of this world what his carnal heart desires, he is for living independent of God, and his providence; he is for gathering together all for himself, in order to spend it on his lusts, and at a distance from his Father, the Father of his mercies, of whom he is not mindful; and to whom he says, Depart from me; having no regard to his worship and service, to his honour and glory, to his cause and interest:

And took his journey into a far country] Which sets forth the state of alienation a sinner is in, while unconverted; he is afar off from God, from God the Father; from the presence of God, and communion with him; from the knowledge of God, and desire after it; from love to him, or fear of him; and from the life of God, or a living soberly, righteously, and godly; and from Christ, from the knowledge of him, from faith in him, love to him, fellowship with him, and subjection to his ordinances; and from the Spirit of God, and every thing that is spiritual; and from all that is good, from the law of God, and from the righteousness of it, and from righteous men:

And there wasted his substance in riotous living] His internal substance, his knowledge and understanding, even in natural things, and became brutish, and even like the beasts that perish; and his worldly substance in rioting and drunkenness, in chambering and wantonness, with barlots, as in *1. 30.* whereby he was brought to a piece of bread, and to the want of it.

14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

Sin strips a man of all that is good and valuable; of the image of God, of the knowledge of divine things, of natural holiness, of moral righteousness, and of strength to perform moral good; hence man is in a wretched and miserable condition, he is poor, and blind, and naked: and if man has spent all, and sin has stripped him of all, where is his free-will? There is no good thing in man, but what comes from the grace of God; nor has he any thing to recommend him to God, or to offer to his creditor, to compound his debts with; nor can he prepare himself for conversion or any good work:

There arose a mighty famine in that land] Sin brings men into a starving and famishing condition; for in the *far country*, the land of sin, there is a famine of the word: though the Gospel is preached, it is only food to spiritual persons; unregenerate men have no desire to it, but neglect and

despise it; and if they attend it, it has no place in them: they that are in this land, are aliens from the ordinances of God, the breasts of consolation, the goodness and fatness of his house; they are in a pit wherein is no water; their taste is vitiated to every thing that is spiritually good; they live on bread of deceit, and labour after that which satisfies not; wherefore they look like skeletons, and are as the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision:

And he began to be in want] Or was in want: when the above is the case, the sinner may be truly said to be in want; an unregenerate man, is in want of every thing that is good; of wisdom and knowledge, of grace and holiness, of righteousness or clothing, of food, and of all the necessities of life: and he may be said to begin to be in want, because man was not originally so, but was possessed of a natural fulness; and because sin is the beginning of want, as soon as one takes place, the other does: moreover, this man now began to see and feel himself to be in want, though as yet he was not rightly and truly sensible of his wants, at least of the way to redress them.

15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

A citizen, not to any one of the saints, for they are not citizens of the *far country*, but of the church of God below, and of heaven above; besides, carnal men do not like the company of such citizens: nor is the devil intended, for though he dwells in this country, he is more than a citizen, than an inhabitant; he is king and governor, the Prince of the world, and the God of it; nor is it feasible, that a man under conviction, and beginning to be sensible of his want, should go and join himself to the devil: but an unregenerate, pharisaical, legal preacher, is designed; a man may be a preacher, and yet in the *far country* of sin and unregeneracy; there may be large gifts, where there is no grace; and a man may have a form of religion and godliness, and know nothing of the power of it; and a great stir and bluster may be made about good works, as were by the Pharisees, when few or none are done: now it is common for persons under legal convictions, to seek after such a preacher, and such a ministry, and to such an one this man went; he went not out of the land of sin, nor to his Father's house, but to one in the same country, where the famine was, and he was starving: *he went*; it was his own choice, he took his own way; he went and told him his case, how he had spent all he had, and in what manner, and what condition he was now in; and he asked his advice and assistance: and he joined himself to him; he

he sat under his ministry, and became a member with him, and stuck close to him, as the word signifies; and was a stickler for him and his principles:

And he sent him into his field to feed swine] He did not give him the least bit of bread to satisfy his hunger; nor did he say one word to him of Christ, the bread of life; nor did he advise him to go to his Father's house, *where there was bread enough, and to spare*: but he sent him into his fields; to work, to cleanse his heart, to reform his life, to fulfil the law, to perform the conditions of the covenant, to make his peace with God, and get an interest in his love and favour; and go through a round of duties continually, and all would be well: he sent him to feed swine there; to converse with self-righteous persons, who may be compared to swine, because of their selfishness; doing all they do for themselves, and not for God and his glory; because they prefer dung before pearls, their own righteousness before Christ, the pearl of great price; and live upon the husks of their own duties; and never look upwards to heaven, as this creature does not, but always downwards on the earth; and though they were outwardly reformed, yet inwardly filthy, and often return to wallowing in the mire again: he sent him there also to gratify the selfish principles of nature; to please himself with his wisdom, righteousness, holiness, and other excellencies he fancied he had attained unto. In short, the expression shews the base employment of a self-justiciary, amidst all his pretensions to religion and virtue: for feeding of swine was very disagreeable to the Jews, and with them scandalous; to whom the eating of swine's flesh was forbidden by the law of God, and the breeding of swine by their traditions; and this is said to be done in a far country, out of Judea.

16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

חורב the fruit of the Charub tree, as the Syriac version interprets it; and which the Jews (n) say is, מאכל בהמה, "the food of beasts:" though, according to what is elsewhere said of it, it should be the food of men also. It is said (o) of R. Simeon ben Jochai, and his son, that "They hid themselves in a cave for fear of the king, and a miracle was wrought for them, חורב להו חורב, "a Charub tree was created for them," and a "fountain of water;" the one, as the gloss observes, was to eat the fruit of, and the other to drink of: but be they what they will, by them are meant, not worldly riches and honours, and car-

nal lusts and pleasures; though these are the principal things of the far country, of this world, or an unregenerate estate; and are greatly desired by carnal minds, and are but swine's meat, very mean food, yea, pernicious, empty, unsatisfying, and perishing; but these were the things this man had been desirous of, and lived upon before, and had ran through them, and had spent all his substance in the pursuit and enjoyment of them; and now he felt the gripes of a natural conscience for them, and found himself in want of something else: wherefore by these husks are meant works of righteousness done by men; which are like husks, external things, done only before men; empty things that have nothing within them; mere trash, and not food; and which can give no satisfaction; mere sordid food, fit only to be cast to dogs or swine; of an ill savour, hard to eat, and difficult of digestion, and which affords no real nourishment; these this man greatly desired to fill his belly with: he found himself empty, and in want; as yet he had no thought of, at least not any desire after the bread in his Father's house; but would fain have satisfied himself with his own doings, and have quieted his mind and conscience with a few external performances, a negative holiness, a legal repentance, and outward reformation: he laboured hard to make his own righteousness do; which was but striving to fill his belly with the east-wind; and is what can never satisfy, because it is not answerable to the law and justice of God; and was no other than

That the swine did eat] Self-righteous persons, like himself; for such an one was now the publican and sinner become, though he did not continue so. Christ's lambs and sheep do not eat such food, nor will, nor can they; only swinish, selfish persons; this is suitable to their nature, they eat it, and live upon it; which shews them to be unrenewed; and that their taste is not changed.

And no man gave unto him] Not the husks, though this is the sense of the Arabic version, which renders it, "neither did he obtain them;" and so it seems to be ours and others: but these were at hand, which he might have taken himself, and did; nor is it reasonable to think he should wait to have them given him by another; or that he should be restrained from them; but it is to be understood of bread, or proper food; and that no man gave that unto him: and the words, as Calvin observes, may be read causally, *for no man gave to him*; and so are a reason why he craved husks, because no man gave him any bread: the citizen, or legal preacher, to whom he joined himself, gave him none; nor the swine, the self-righteous persons, to whom he was sent, and with whom he conversed, gave him none; he had nothing under the

(n) T. Hieros. Maaserot, fol. 50. 2.

(o) T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 33. 2.

the ministry, nor in conversation, that was proper food to him; there were nothing but these husks that presented, and he tried to satisfy himself with them; and indeed none but Christ can give the true bread, the bread of life, to those that are hungry and in want.

17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

An unregenerate man, whether while a voluptuous man, or a self-righteous man, is not himself; he is besides himself, and is no other than a madman. The man that pursues his worldly lusts and pleasures, promises himself liberty, while he is a slave; he ruins himself, his soul, body, and estate; and chooses to do it, rather than part with his lusts; he takes delight in doing mischief himself, and in seeing it done by others; he proclaims his folly publicly, declares his sin, and glories in it; all which a man in his right mind would never do. The self-righteous person trusts in his own heart, which is the greatest madness and folly in the world; he compasses himself about with sparks of his own kindling, and sacrifices to his own net; he dresses himself in his rags, and pleases and prides himself with them, when a robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation, are provided; which no man in his senses would ever do. But when the Spirit of God comes to work upon a sinner's heart in conversion, he brings him to himself; which a man may be said to be, when he is brought to true evangelical repentance for sin; and that is, when he has a true sense of it, as committed against God, and a godly sorrow for it, and makes an hearty and ingenuous acknowledgment of it, and forsakes it; and when he is brought to a sense of the insufficiency of his own righteousness, and is made willing to part with it, and desires to be found in Christ, and in his righteousness alone, which he is encouraged to lay hold on, and receive by faith, trust to, and rejoice in; when he has his spiritual senses exercised on Christ, and to discern between good and evil; and is brought to the feet of Jesus, as to submit to his righteousness, so to serve him; when he is all this, then, like the man in the Gospel, he is clothed, and in his right mind:

He said, *How many hired servants of my Father's?* Who, according to some, were the scribes and Pharisees, men of a servile disposition, and of mercenary views; and were, by profession, the servants of God, and had plenty of bread, because they had all the external means and ordinances; but these are designed by the elder brother in the parable; and besides, this man had endeavoured

to live as they did in this far country. It may be queried, whether the ministers of the Gospel are not intended, since these are the servants of the most high God; are labourers hired by him; and are worthy of their hire, and abound with Gospel-provisions for the service of others. But to this it may be objected, the desire of this man to be made as one of them, *yc.* 19. which petition expresses his humility; whereas to be a servant, in this sense, is to have the highest place and office in his Father's house. Rather therefore the meanest of the saints, and household of God, are here meant, who have the least degree of evangelical light, whose faith is weak, and their consolation small; and who, though they are sons, yet, by reason of that legality and mercenaryness that appear in their frames and services, differ little from servants; and yet these, in comparison of him, who was in a hungry and starving condition,

Have bread enough, and to spare] As the doctrines, promises, and ordinances of the Gospel, the fulness of grace that is in Christ, and Christ himself the bread of life; which are more than enough for them, and sufficient for the whole family in heaven, and in earth: and even the meanest and weakest believer may be said to have *enough and to spare*, because he has an interest in all these; though by reason of the weakness of his faith, it is but now and then he has a full and comfortable meal; but this is infinitely better than to be starving, as this man was:

And I perish with hunger] The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions add, *here*; in this far country, in the citizen's fields, among his swine, and their husks. All mankind are in a lost and perishing condition; for having sinned against God, they have exposed themselves to the curses of the law, and are destitute of a justifying righteousness, and are in the way to ruin and destruction; but all are not sensible of it, being ignorant of God and his righteousness, of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and of the insufficiency of their own righteousness; but some are sensible of it, and in their own apprehensions *are ready to perish*: these see sin in its true light, without a view of pardon; an angry God, without a smile; injured justice, without a righteousness; and a broken law, without a satisfaction for the violation of it; and such was this man's case. The Jewish writers (p) say, "A sinner is like to a son that runs away from his father, and turns his back upon him; who yet afterwards repents, and has a mind to return to his father's house." so it was now with the publicans and sinners, signified by this man!

(p) R. Chayim in Lib. Chayim, par. 4. c. 6. apud Mail Jud. Theolog. loc. 15. p. 243.

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

This is the resolution which at last, through divine grace, he came unto: he determines to quit the country, and his companions; he had left his harlots, and his old course of living before, but was in the same country still; for this a man may do, and yet remain unregenerate: but he is now for leaving the country itself, and his new acquaintance; he is now determined to drop his legal preacher, to be gone out of his fields, and from under his ministry, and to leave his swine and husks;

And go to my Father] Not to his old companions in debauchery and sin; nor to his elder brother, the Pharisees; he had made trial of both these to his cost already: nor to his Father's servants, but to his Father himself; to which he was moved and encouraged, from his being ready to perish, from the fulness of bread in his Father's house, and from the relation he stood in to him: notwithstanding all that had passed, he was his Father, and a kind and merciful one: this shews, that he knew him as his Father, having now the Spirit of adoption sent down into him; and the way unto him, which lies through Christ the mediator:

And will say unto him, Father] Or, *my Father*, as the Syriac and Persic versions read:

I have sinned against heaven] By preferring earthly things to heavenly ones; and have sinned openly in the face of the heavens, who were witnesses against him; and against God, who dwells in heaven. It was usual with the Jews to call God, שמים "heaven;" see the note on *Matt. xxi. 25*. They have this very phrase; "There is a man, say (q) they, who sins against earth, and he does not חטא בשמים "sin against heaven;" against "heaven, and he does not sin against earth: but "he that speaks with an ill tongue, sins against "heaven and earth," *Psal. lxxiii. 9*. And so the sense is, that he had sinned against God himself, and not merely against men, and human laws. All sin is a transgression of the law of God; and the thought of sin being committed against a God of infinite holiness, justice, goodness, grace, and mercy, is cutting to a sensible sinner: and this being the case, this man determined to go to God his Father, and him only, for the pardon of his sin, against whom it was committed. It is added,

And before thee] For he was now convinced of his omniscience. Sin may be committed against a

man, and not before him, or he not know it; but whatever is committed against God, is before him; it is in his sight, he knows it: he is God omniscient; though sinners take no notice of this perfection of his, but go on in sin, as if it was not seen, known, and observed by God. But when God works powerfully and effectually upon the heart of a sinner, he convinces him of his omniscience, as this man was convinced, hence he determined to go to God, and acknowledge his sin before him; and that it was committed before him, and was in his sight; and that he could not be justified in his sight by any righteousness of his own; and therefore humbly desires pardon at his hands. This man's sense of sin, and sorrow for it, and confession of it, appear very right and genuine, which he determined to express; they appear to be the convictions of the Spirit of God: it was not a sense of sin, and sorrow for it, as done before men, but God; and the concern was not so much for the mischief that comes by sin, as for the evil that was in it; and this did not drive him to despair, as in the cases of Cain and Judas, but brought him home to his Father; and his confession appears to be hearty, sincere, and without excuse.

19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

As all the Jews were; not only by creation, and providential care, as well as all men are; but by national adoption: and however worthy this man might think himself to be called a son of God before, and value himself upon it; he now sees and was ready to own his unworthiness to be called so in any sense; and much more to be called and accounted a son of God by special adoption:

Make me as one of thy hired servants] This is said, not from a servile spirit, but to express the mean thoughts he had of himself, and the great desire he had to be fed from his Father's table, even in the meanest way; and what an happiness and honour it would be to him, could he be the meanest in his family, a door-keeper in his house; which was more eligible to him, than to dwell in the tents of sin, or continue in this hungry and starving condition.

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

This shews that his resolution to arise was not of nature, but of grace, by its being put into execution; for it was made and executed, not in his own strength, but in another's: he did not confer

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(q) Midrash Kohelet, in c. 9. 12. fol. 79. 4. T. Hierol. Pesch, fol. 16. 1.

with flesh and blood; nor listen to discouragements which might present; as the distance of the way, the danger in it, the cold reception, if not rejection, he might expect from his Father: but he arose immediately; he arose and stood upon his feet, in obedience to the heavenly call, being assisted by divine grace; he arose and quitted the far country, the citizen, swine, and husks, and denied both sinful and righteous self:

And came to his Father] His own Father; "the Father of himself," as in the Greek text, who was so before he came to him; a sense of which he had, and was what encouraged him the rather to go to him: and this coming to him denotes a progression towards him; for as yet he was not come to him, but was at some distance, as the next clause expresses; and means not so much attendance on ordinances, as some inward secret desires after God:

But when he was yet a great way off] This is not to be understood of his state of alienation from God, which is before signified by his being in a far country; but the distance he observed, as conscious of his vileness, and unworthiness; and the humility he expressed on a view of himself; and a sense he had of his need of divine grace: and which is grateful to God; he looks to such that are of an humble, and of a contrite spirit, and dwells among them, and gives more grace to them:

His Father saw him] He saw him when in the far country, spending his substance with harlots, and in riotous living; he saw him when among the swine and husks; he saw him when he came to himself, and all the motions and determinations of his heart; he saw him in his progress towards him, and looked upon him with an eye of love, pity, and compassion, as it follows,

And had compassion] God is full of compassion, and pities him, as a Father does his children; yea, as a woman's bowels of compassion yern after the son of her womb: he had compassion on him, and his bowels of pity moved towards him, he being as one grieved in spirit for his sins, and wounded with a sense of them, and wanting a view of pardon, as starving and famishing, and as naked, and without clothing.

And ran] To him, which shews the quick notice God takes of the first motions of his own grace in the hearts of sensible sinners; the speedy relief he gives to distressed ones; and this points out his preventing grace and goodness.

And fell on his neck] Expressive of the strength of his affection to him, *Gen. xlv. 14. and xlv. 29. Acts xx. 37.* and of his great condescension and grace to fall on that neck which had been like an

iron sinew, so stiff and rebellious; though now, through divine grace, was made flexible and pliable, and subject to him, and willing to bear the yoke, and to do whatever he would have him; and this was grateful to his Father:

And kissed him] As a token of love; and as owning the relation he stood in to him; as a sign of reconciliation and friendship; and was an admission of him to great nearness to his person; and an application and manifestation of great love indeed to him; and a strong incentive of love in the son to him again; see *John iv. 19.*

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

Or, *my Father*, as the Syriac version reads; and the Persian version adds, *pardon me*: sin lay heavy on him, and he wanted a view and application of pardoning grace, though he seems to be prevented making this request by the kiss he received from his Father:

I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight] This is what he determined to say, and was allowed to say, having a deep sense of his sin and vileness, and which was increased by the love and kindness his Father had shewn him.

And am no more worthy to be called thy son] So much he was suffered to say, which fully expresses his sense of his vileness and unworthiness: but he was not allowed to say, *make me as one of thy hired servants*; because this could not be granted; for a son is always a son, and cannot become a servant; see *Gal. iv. 6, 7.*

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

The word *but*, with which this verse begins, is expressive of much grace, as it often is; see *1 Cor. vi. 11. Eph. ii. 4. 1 Tim. i. 13. Titus iii. 4.* and signifies, that though the son had behaved so badly, and was now so sensible of it himself, as that he desired to be a *hired servant*, being unworthy to be called a son; but the Father, against whom he had sinned, would hear nothing of it: but

Said to his servants] Not the angels, but the ministers of the Gospel; who are the servants of the most high God; and whose business it is to set forth, in the ministry of the word, the righteousness of Christ; and the everlasting love of God; and to direct souls to a life and conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ; and to set before them the rich provisions of the Gospel for their nourishment,

ishment, joy, and comfort. These servants, the Father of the son ordered, not to take him away from his presence, as one whose person he could not endure in his sight; nor to terrify and affright him with the curse and condemnation of the law, and to fill his mind with wrath and terror; nor even to chastise and correct him for his former course of living, or to upbraid him with it; but to confer upon him all the honour, and high favours, and blessings, that could be expressed in the following language:

Bring forth the best robe] Out of the wardrobe that it is in. The Vulgate Latin version adds, *quickly*; which increases the Father's regard to him, and shews that he was in haste to have his son appear in a better condition: the Arabic version adds *it* in the next clause, "and put it on him *quickly*;" which expresses the same thing: and the Ethiopic version renders it, "hasten ye, bring," &c. By the *best robe* is meant, not water-baptism; nor an holy life and conversation; nor any particular grace, as faith, or hope, or charity; or the whole of sanctification; nor Adam's robe of innocence; but the righteousness of Christ, which is often compared to a robe or garment, *Isaiah* lxi. 10. *Zech.* iii. 4. *Rev.* xix. 8. because it is not any thing in believers, but what is unto them, and upon them, and is put there by an act of God's grace in imputation; and is what covers their naked souls, and hides their sins from the avenging eye of divine justice; protects them from all injuries, and saves them from wrath to come; as well as beautifies and adorns them, and renders them acceptable in the sight of God; and keeps them warm and alive; and gives them a right and title to eternal life. This is as in the Greek text, the *first robe*; and so it is rendered by the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions; because it was first in God's designation and counsel, and in Christ the head of his people, in whom they are blessed with all spiritual blessings before the foundation of the world, and so with this blessing; and it was also provided and secured in the everlasting covenant of grace, long before Adam's robe of innocence and righteousness was made and wore by him: the reference is not to the first that should be come at in the wardrobe; or to that which the son wore before he went into the far country; but to the *טלית* *Talith*, which was the first and uppermost garment wore by the Jews, and answers to the Greek word *στολή*, *the stole*, here used: so the Babylonish garment is called, *אֵצְמֵל וְמִלְתָּא* (*r*) which the gloss interprets *a Talith*, made of pure wool. The Ethiopic version renders the phrase, "fragrant garments;" and such are Christ's garments of salvation, and robe of

righteousness: see *Psalms* xlv. 8. the Persian version renders it, "the splendid robe;" and the Syriac, as ours, the "chief, or best robe;" and such is Christ's righteousness, it is a better righteousness, not only than that of a self-righteous Pharisee; but better than the outward conversation-garment of a real good man, which, at best is imperfect; or than the inward sanctification of the Spirit of God, which, though pure, is not yet perfect: it is better than the robe of innocence wore by Adam in his sinless state; for that was but a natural righteousness, and the righteousness of a creature, and was loseable, as the event has shewn; and had he kept it, would not have given him a title to eternal life: yea, it is better than the righteousness of the angels in heaven; for what is said of Adam's, may be said of theirs, that it is natural, the righteousness of a creature; and had it not been for confirming grace, a loseable one: but Christ's righteousness is pure and perfect; the righteousness of God, and an everlasting one: and when the servants of God, the ministers of the Gospel, are ordered to bring it out,

And put it on him] This is done, not by the imputation of it to men, for that is the Father's act; nor by application of it to them, that is, the Spirit's work; but by a declaration of it, setting it forth in a ministerial way before them; declaring it to be a justifying one, and encouraging their faith to lay hold upon it as such:

And put a ring on his hand] On one of the fingers of his hand: by which is intended, not the grace of faith; that is rather the hand on which the ring is put; and though this grace is both precious and ornamental, as will be allowed, yet it does not unite to Christ, this must be denied; it being a grace which flows from union, as all grace does; and by which souls have communion with Christ: nor are good works designed; such indeed who are called by grace, are to be set to work from a right principle, to a right end; and true grace does shew itself by works; and good works are the seal and token of grace to the world: but then, as before, these are rather meant by the hand; since that is the instrument of action: nor is the seal and earnest of the Spirit meant by the ring. The Spirit of God is certainly the seal of grace, and the earnest of glory; and to have this is a high favour, and a precious benefit indeed, and what will never be taken away; but as faith, so the Spirit, is not the bond of union between God and his people, but the fruit of it: by the *ring* is meant the everlasting love of God; and which, as a ring, is round, and has neither beginning nor end; it does not begin with the obedience of *us* people, nor with their love to him; nor with their

(r) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 44, 1. Vil. Targum in Job, vii, 21.

conversion; nor with the mission, sufferings, and death, of Christ; but was from all eternity; nor will it have any end, nor can there be any separation from it: this is the bond of union that can never be dissolved; and this being manifested to the soul, is a token of freedom; it sets a man free from the bondage of corruption, and from the slavery of Satan, and introduces into the liberty of the children of God: it is a mark of great honour, a sign of riches, both of grace and glory; it is a declaration of sonship, and heirship; and is a seal and pledge of everlasting happiness. Now the putting on of this ring does not design the shedding abroad of this love in the heart by the Spirit of God; but the declaration of it by his servants in a ministerial way; setting it forth in its nature and effects, to the great joy and comfort of souls; when believers receive it by the hand of faith, and which constrains them, and makes them active, and puts them upon doing good works to the glory of God.

And shoes on his feet] By feet are meant the outward walk and conversation; which in persons called by grace should be different from what it was before, and from that of others: it should not be loose and naked, as those that walk barefoot, but should be upright, straight, and regular; not carnal and earthly, but spiritual and heavenly; and should be with prudence, care, and circumspection, and worthy of their vocation, and as becomes the Gospel of Christ: and by the shoes may be meant, the preparation of the Gospel of peace, Eph. vi. 15. The Gospel is as shoes to the feet; it beautifies and adorns, Cant. vii. 1. it keeps the feet tight and straight, the conversation regular and upright; preserves from slipping and falling; strengthens and makes more fit for walking; directs, guides, and influences in walking, and protects from the stones, thorns, and scorpions of the world's reproaches; and the doctrines of it are shoes that will never wear out: and to walk according to the Gospel of Christ, is what Gospel-ministers direct and exhort unto, and may be meant by their putting on those shoes; they pressing a good life and conversation from, and by the doctrines of grace. A person with all these things on him, was reckoned, among the Jews, as one thoroughly dressed: a canon of theirs, relating to the defilement of leprosy, runs thus⁽¹⁾; "A man of Israel that goes into a house infected with the plague of leprosy, וסנליו ברגליו ושבטתו בירי, "clothed with his garments, and his sandals on his feet, and his rings on his hands;" lo, that man is immediately defiled."

23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:

By the fatted calf Christ is designed, in allusion to the calves offered in sacrifice, which were offered for sin-offerings, and for peace-offerings, and for burnt-offerings; and were one of the sacrifices on the day of atonement: so Christ has offered up himself in soul and body, freely and voluntarily, in the room and stead of his people, an offering and sacrifice to God, of a sweet-smelling savour; which is well-pleasing to him, and effectual to the purposes for which it was offered, and therefore will never be repeated; and has hereby satisfied law and justice, procured peace and reconciliation, and made full atonement and expiation for all their sins and transgressions: or else in allusion to the feasts and liberal entertainments of friends, whereof the fatted calf made a considerable part, Gen. xviii. 7, 8. 1 Sam. xxviii. 24, 25. Amos vi. 4. Mal. iv. 2. Christ is the best provision that can be set before a believer, or he can feed upon; yea, the best that God can give, or saints desire: he is true and real food, spiritual, savoury, satisfying, and durable: what both gives and preserves life; nourishes, strengthens, refreshes, delights, and fattens. Now by bringing it hither, is meant preaching Christ; opening the scriptures concerning him; setting him before believers, as their only proper food, both in the ministry of the word, and in the Lord's supper: and killing him does not design either the slaying of him in purpose, promise, and type, from the foundation of the world; nor the actual crucifixion of him by the Jews; but the setting him forth in the Gospel in a ministerial way, as crucified and slain, for saints by faith to feed and live upon:

And let us eat, and be merry] For as the Jews say⁽¹⁾, "There is no mirth without eating and drinking:" this is a mutual invitation or encouragement to eat of the fatted calf: the parties called upon to eat of it are the Father, the servants, and the returned son. The Father, to whom the salvation of his people, by the death of Christ, is as a feast; his heart was set upon this from everlasting; and he was infinitely well pleased with Christ, as the surety of his people from all eternity; his eye was upon him as such throughout the several dispensations before his coming; he sent him forth with great pleasure in the fulness of time; and not only did not spare him, but it even pleased him to bruise him; and he accepted of his sacrifice with delight; and takes pleasure in seeing his people feed upon their crucified Saviour: and this is expressive of that communion which God admits his people to with himself; and which, as it is signified by walking and talking, and sitting and dwelling, so by eating together; and is in consequence

sequence

(1) Maimon, Hilch. Tumaot Tzaraath, c. 16. §. 6.

(1) T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 9. 1.

sequence of union to him; and is only enjoyed by true believers; and is the greatest blessing on earth, and what is next to heaven. The servants, the ministers of the Gospel, they are among the *us*, who are to *eat*; and it is but reasonable they should; and it is even necessary that they do eat, and live upon a crucified Christ themselves, whose business it is to set him forth as such to others: and especially the returned son makes a principal guest at this entertainment; for whom it is made, and for whose sake chiefly the invitation to *eat* is given: by which is meant not corporal eating, but eating by faith; which supposes food to eat, of which there is plenty in the Gospel-provision; a principle of life infused, for a dead man cannot eat; and spiritual hunger and thirst, otherwise there will be no appetite; and the grace of faith, which is the hand that takes, and the mouth that receives, and eats spiritual food: and believers have full and free liberty to eat of it: nor should they object their own unworthiness, but consider the suitability of the food unto them; that it is on purpose prepared for them; that they are in their Father's house, and at his table; and the invitation to eat is hearty and cordial; and both the Father and Christ give this food, and bid welcome to it; and there is a necessity of eating it, for without this there can be no *living*, in a spiritual sense: it is hereby that life is supported and maintained; without this the saints must be starving; it is this which preserves from hunger, and satisfies it, and nourishes up unto eternal life. The manner of eating, or the circumstance attending it, is *mirth*, both in Father, son, and servants; and as corporal, so spiritual eating should be *with joy, and with a merry heart*, Eccl. ix. 7. and indeed, is the most proper means of stirring and increasing spiritual joy and pleasure; see the note on the latter part of the following verse.

24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

These words, *my son was dead*, contain the reasons of the above entertainment, and of all that spiritual joy and mirth; in which the Father acknowledges the returning penitent as his son; though he had behaved so wickedly before, and though he judged himself unworthy of the relation; and this he did, by sending the Spirit of adoption into his heart, to witness his sonship to him; and takes notice of his past state and condition, to shew the great reason there was for joy, at his present one: for before he *was dead*, dead in Adam, *in whom all died*; dead in law, being under a sentence of condemnation and death; and *dead in trespasses and sins*, which is a spiritual or moral

death, in which all mankind by nature are: and which lies in a separation from God, Father, Son, and Spirit; in an alienation from the life of God; in a deformation of the image of God; in a loss of original righteousness; in the darkness of the understanding; in the inordinateness of the affections; in the pollution of the mind and conscience; in the stubbornness of the will; and in an impotency to that which is spiritually good; and in a privation of spiritual sense and motion: this had been the case, but now it was otherwise:

And is alive again] The spirit of life from Christ had entered into him, and Christ was formed in his heart; and a principle of life was infused into him; a divine image was enstamped upon his soul; the understanding was enlightened in divine things; the affections were set upon them; the will was subjected to God, to his will and law, and to Christ and his righteousness, and the way of salvation by him, and to his commands and ordinances; and principles of grace, and holiness were wrought in him, to do, as well as to will; a spiritual sense of things was given him; a spiritual sight, hearing, tasting, and feeling, and favouring; he lived a life of holiness from Christ, of faith upon him, and of communion with him, and to his glory: and he came to be so, not of himself, nor by any creature; for no man can quicken himself, nor can any creature do it for him; it was entirely owing to the power and grace of God: and great reason here was for joy and mirth, as there is for every one that is quickened by the Spirit of God; for such shall never enter into condemnation, nor die again, but *shall live and reign with Christ for ever*:

He was lost] Lost in Adam, and in himself; so he was when in the far country, and when among the swine and husks; so as that he knew not where he was, nor what a condition he was in; nor did he know how to get out of it, nor could he help himself, nor could any other creature; though not irretrievably and irrecoverably lost; not to the love of God, his knowledge of him, care and provision for him in Christ, in his counsel and covenant: hence the following mercy,

And is found] Not only by Christ in redemption, but by the Spirit of Christ in effectual vocation; when he was brought and came to himself, and saw his lost state and condition by nature; and when he was directed and brought home to his Father's house, and entertained with all the provisions of it; and such have reason to rejoice and be glad, for they shall be found in Christ at death and at judgment, and shall be with him to all eternity:

And they began to be merry] All parties. The Father expressed his joy, and the gladness of his heart,

heart, upon the return of his son to him; he exhorted to be merry on this account, *ψ. 23.* and enforces it with reasons in this verse, taken from the relation he stood in to him, and the wonderful change that had passed upon him, and the finding of him; and he rejoices himself at his conversion, in the exercise of that grace which he himself implanted, and in the performance of duty by his assistance: not that any new joy arises in God's heart at such a time; for he always rejoiced in the persons of his elect, as they were the objects of his love, as chosen in Christ, and given to him, and as interested in the covenant of grace; and he rejoiced in the accomplishment of their salvation by his Son: but in conversion, there are new expressions of joy; he *rejoices over them to do them good*, and rejoices in the good he does them; and this is the open beginning of his joy, and but the beginning of it; for it will continue, it is not all over, nor all expressed, but will be in the fullest manner hereafter, to all eternity. The returned son began to be merry, as he had good reason for it; as that he was come back from the far country, where a mighty famine had been; and from the citizen of that country, his fields, and swine; that he was come to his Father, and his Father's house, where was *bread enough and to spare*; an house well furnished with all suitable provisions; a family made up of saints, where ministers of the Gospel are stewards, and angels guards, and where Christ is Son, Priest, and Master: and that he was received here, and owned as a son; not only was one secretly, but was owned as such openly; and was not only called so by the servants, but by the Father himself; and that after he had behaved so vilely, and in his own conscience knew he was unworthy of the relation: and that he was received immediately, as soon as ever he came, and that in the most tender manner; and was entertained in the most free, generous, and sumptuous way; though he went away from his Father of himself, and had spent his substance in a scandalous manner; and was in a most filthy, ragged, and piteous condition; and that he should be clothed with the best robe, the robe of Christ's righteousness; and so had nothing to fear from law and justice; nor was he in any danger of wrath to come, because of his sins; nor had he any reason to doubt of his right and admission to the heavenly glory; and that he had the ring of love on the hand of faith, and could believe his interest in it, which is better than life, and will continue for ever; and that his feet were *shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace*; that he understood the Gospel, and was brought to a submission to Gospel-ordinances, and had his conversation agreeable to it; and that the fatted calf was killed,

and set before him to eat of, and feed upon: and now he began to live and fare sumptuously, and to have spiritual joy and pleasure, which he never knew before; and this was but the beginning of joy to him: spiritual joy is not all over at once, it continues and increases; nor is it full and perfect in this life, but in heaven it will be compleat, and without interruption. The servants also, the ministers of the Gospel, began to be merry on this occasion; who express their joy at the conversion of sinners, because of the glory of Father, Son, and Spirit, concerned in it; because of the grace bestowed then on sinners themselves; and because the interest of Christ is strengthened, and his churches increased, and Satan's kingdom weakened; and because their own ministry is blessed; and which strengthens their hands and hearts, and encourages them to go on in their work: and this is but the beginning of their joy; for they continue to rejoice at the growth of grace in believers, and when they are in a thriving and flourishing condition; when they walk becoming the Gospel of Christ, and live in peace among themselves; and persevere in faith and holiness to the end; and these will be their *joy and crown of rejoicing*, at the coming of Christ Jesus.

25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing.

By *the elder son* is meant, not angels, as has been observed on *ψ. 11.* nor truly converted persons of some standing in the church; for though these may be said to be *elder* than young converts, and are more solid and settled, yet they are not ignorant of spiritual mirth; nor of the Gospel-sound; nor are they angry at the conversion of sinners; nor will they ever speak in such commendation of themselves; or say that they never had a kid, much less a fatted calf, as this elder brother does: nor the Jews in general, in distinction from the Gentiles, as has been remarked in the above place: the scribes and Pharisees in particular are meant, in opposition to the publicans and sinners: now these are said to be *in the field*; in the world, which is comparable to an uncultivated field; being overrun with the briars and thorns of sin, and sinful men; where beasts of prey inhabit, and who are fitly signified by *lions, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword*; and out of which the garden of the church is taken and separated, and fenced by distinguishing grace: now this elder brother, the scribe and Pharisee, notwithstanding all his sobriety and morality, was in a state of nature and unregeneracy, in the same condition he came into the world; and was under the influence of the god of

the world; and was taken up with the things of the world, the honours, riches, and profits of it: and though he was in the Jewish church-state, yet was in the field of the world; the ceremonies of that state, were the rudiments of the world; and the sanctuary in it, was a worldly sanctuary; and the chief men in it, were the princes of the world: and this *elder son was in the field* at work, working for life: to work is right, when men work from a principle of grace, in the name, faith, and strength of Christ, to the glory of God and religion, and their own and others good; and ascribe all they do to the grace of God, and acknowledge their own unworthiness; but to work, in order to obtain righteousness, life, and salvation, proceeds from wretched ignorance, and is an instance of the pride and vanity of human nature; and is not only a vain and fruitless attempt, but a piece of wickedness, it being a denial of Christ, as God's salvation: now while the younger son, the publicans and sinners, were received and entertained in the house and kingdom of God their Father, the elder son, the scribe and Pharisee, were without in the field, labouring to obtain life by doing;

And as he came and drew nigh to the house] The Ethiopic version reads, "to the border of the city: he came out of the field, the world; not that he was come out from the world, and had left the company of the men of it, or parted with the sins and lusts of it; but he came from his labour, having done his day's work, and the task of duty he had set himself; and was now going for his hire, for what he imagined he had merited: and *drew nigh to the house*; for he did not go in, *ŷ. 28.* he only made some advances to it, and took some steps towards entrance into it; namely, into a visible church; he came to hear the word, as the scribes and Pharisees did; and to attend on ordinances, particularly at the administration of the ordinance of baptism, and seemed desirous of submitting to it in John's time; but never came to Christ in a spiritual way; nor entered into the kingdom of heaven, the Gospel-dispensation; and did all that could be to hinder others, especially publicans and sinners.

He heard music and dancing] The Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, leave out *dancing*; the former only reads, "the voice of the singing of many;" and the next, "the voice of singing;" and the last, "pipes and songs:" by *music* is meant, not the instrumental music used in the Old Testament-church; nor vocal singing in the new; but the preaching of the Gospel by the ministers of it, the servants, in *ŷ. 22, 23.* setting forth the love of God, the righteousness of Christ, peace, pardon, and salvation by him; in which, as in music, there

is a distinction of sounds: the voice of Christ in the Gospel, and the several doctrines of it, are distinctly pronounced, discerned, and understood: and there is also, as in music, an harmony and agreement; the Gospel does not give an uncertain sound, nor contradict itself; it is not yea and nay: and, like music, it is delightful and charming; it is a sound of love in all the three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit; of free grace, and rich mercy; of liberty, reconciliation, forgiveness, righteousness, and eternal life: and as music, has a powerful and attractive virtue in it; so the Gospel is mighty and efficacious in the hand of the Spirit of God, to quicken, even dead sinners, to draw them to Christ, to allure, charm, and comfort them: *dancing* may design those expressions of joy which are delivered by young converts at hearing the Gospel, as by the three thousand, in *Acts ii. 41.* by the inhabitants of Samaria, *Acts viii. 6, 8.* and by the jailor and his household, *Acts xvi. 34.* and by many others: now all this the elder brother, the scribes and Pharisees, *heard*; not so as to know the true meaning of it, as appears from the following verse; nor as to approve of it; nor so as to feel the power, and enjoy the sweetness of it; nor as to practise what was heard; only externally *hearing, they heard, but understood not; their eyes were blinded, and their hearts were hardened.*

26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

He called one of the ministers of the word, one of the disciples of Christ, as the scribes and Pharisees sometimes did; choosing rather to speak to one of the disciples, than to Christ himself, when they were offended; see *Mark ii. 16.*

And asked what these things meant] For self-righteous persons, as these scribes and Pharisees were, are ignorant of the truths of the Gospel; they do not understand them, nor conceive what is meant by them: they cannot take in the doctrine of God's everlasting love, that it should be so early; be towards some, and not others; that it should be independent of mens works, both in the rise and continuance of it; that it should be exercised towards sinners, and yet be no licentious doctrine; and as much at a loss are they about the doctrine of election; as that it should be eternal, personal, discriminating, irrespective of works, and yet give no liberty to sin: they know nothing of the covenant of grace, nor have any other notion but of a covenant of works; and if of any other, yet a conditional one, made with them upon their conversion; or rather, one of their own making, and which depends on their good behaviour: they are ignorant of salvation by Christ; of justification by his righteousness; of peace and pardon by his blood;

blood; of the doctrine of regeneration, and of living by faith on Christ; and of eternal life, as God's free-gift; and so likewise of spiritual joy, and mirth: they are strangers to themselves, their lost state and condition, and a deliverance out of it; to the kingdom of God, or an internal work of grace, the fruits of which are *peace and joy in the holy Ghost*; and to the person, offices, and grace of Christ; to justification and atonement by him; to the promises of the Gospel; and to that itself, which is the joyful sound; all which produce spiritual joy, delight, and pleasure in sensible souls: the rejoicing of such persons is only in themselves, and in their own works and duties; but as for true solid spiritual joy, they intermeddle not with it, nor know they what it means.

27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

The Syriac, Arabic, and Persian versions, leave out the copulative *and*, and the latter reads, "*they said unto him*;" the servants, one or other of them:

Thy brother is come] For in the relation of a brother, the younger son stood to him; being of the same nature and species, of the same nation, and both sons by national adoption; who was *come* to his Father, and to his Father's house; not as a righteous and worthy person in himself, but as a sinner, a sensible and penitent one; as hungry, naked, and ready to perish; and as unworthy, in his own opinion, of the least mercy and favour, and especially to be called a son:

And thy Father] Who was so by creation, by national adoption, and by profession:

Hath killed the fatted calf] By which Christ is meant; see the note on *ψ. 23.* and designs either the concern the Father had in the death of Christ; or rather, his orders to his ministering servants to preach a crucified Christ, to the comfort of poor sinners; and in general, expresses the large and rich entertainment God makes for souls, when they are brought home to him by repentance: and the Persian version adds, "and hath made a feast;" the reason of which is given in the next clause:

Because he hath received him safe and sound] Or "in good health." This is left out in the Persian version, but rightly retained in all others: the word translated *received*, signifies the recovery, or enjoyment of any thing before had, but since lost, and the taking it at the hands of another: the elect of God, signified by the younger son, were his in a peculiar sense, being *chosen* by him; but through the fall of Adam, and their own transgressions,

were in some sense lost unto him; but in consequence of redemption by Christ, and through efficacious grace in vocation, are found, received, and enjoyed again; and so the Ethiopic version reads it, "because he found him alive;" and so took him again, as he did, at the hands of his Son: all the elect of God were put into the hands of Christ, as the surety of them; and being redeemed by his blood in effectual vocation, they are brought by him to the Father, and come to God by him; as they are also received by the Father from the hands of his Spirit, who convinces them of sin, causes them to believe in Christ, witnesses their adoption to them, in a view of which they come to God, and are received by him; and even from their own hands too, for under the power of divine grace, they are made willing to give up themselves to the Lord, and do so; who kindly and graciously receives them into his arms: into his heart's love and affection, into the open enjoyment of it; into his care and protection, into his family, and into communion with himself, and will afterwards receive them to glory: the case and condition in which he was received is, *safe and sound*; there is but one word in the original; some translate it *safe*, as the Arabic version; and others *sound*, as the Syriac; and ours both: he was received *safe*, though he had been in a far country, and in a mighty famine, and almost starved. God's elect fell in Adam, as others; their nature is corrupted by sin, and they are guilty of actual transgressions, which deserve death; yet they were preserved in Christ, and being redeemed by him, are *safe*; so that the law cannot lay hold on them, nor sin, nor any thing else condemn them; nor Satan destroy them: and he was received *sound*, in his right mind; being come to himself, and brought to true repentance for his sin; and willing to part with his own righteousness, and to be clothed with the best robe; and having his spiritual senses exercised to discern between good and evil, and upon the person and grace of Christ: or he was received *sound*, being in good health, and as opposed to being sick or diseased: sins are diseases; and as all men, so God's elect, are attended with them; but being made sensible of them, they come to Christ for healing; and they are perfectly cured by him; by his stripes and wounds, all their iniquities are forgiven; so that they have no reason to say any more they are sick: and hence the Father receives them *safe and sound*; and which is matter of joy, and was the occasion of all this music, dancing, and feasting.

28 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.

He was angry, particularly that *the fatted calf* was

was killed, &c. 27, 30. the preaching of a crucified Christ, and of free and full salvation by him, is highly displeasing and provoking to self-righteous persons; they are angry at it, that it should be free, that election to salvation should be of grace, that justification should be freely by the grace of God, and that pardon of sin should be according to the riches of God's grace; and salvation be by grace, and not by works; and that it should be discriminating, that God should appoint *some*, and not *all* unto salvation; that Christ should redeem *some*, and not *all*; and that all men are not called unto it, by his Spirit and grace: and that it should be full and compleat, so as nothing can be added to it; and that it should be for sinners, and alone by Christ, and by him as crucified: it would be agreeable, was it taught that salvation was by Christ in a doctrinal way, by giving laws and rules to men whereby to save themselves; or that Christ saves by example, and not by his sacrifice, in a way of satisfaction for sin. Now, though no grievous words were used, nor any thing said that might justly provoke, yet such was the pride of his heart, that he could not bear that his brother should be taken so much notice of, who had acted and lived so scandalously; and besides, his own character as a righteous person was neglected by this doctrine, and his own righteousness laid aside, in the business of justification and salvation, which was intolerable by him:

And would not go in] Into his Father's house, nor to the feast, nor into the kingdom of heaven, or Gospel-dispensation; the scribes and Pharisees shut it up to themselves, and others; would neither go in themselves, nor suffer others; they did not believe Jesus to be the Messiah, nor did they receive, but reject him; nor did they give any credit to the doctrines, nor submit to the ordinances of that dispensation:

Therefore came his Father out] Not in a way of wrath and judgment, but in the ministry of the word: for though the Jews rejected it, it was not at once taken away from them, but was continued time after time, and for some considerable time. The Jews of old had the ministry of the word, both by angels and men; God frequently went forth to them by his prophets, and at last by his Son; and though they were angry with him, and rejected him, yet still the ministry of the word, by the disciples of Christ, was continued a good while to them; which shews the condescending goodness and grace of God, and his patience and long suffering towards them:

And intreated him] The Persic version reads, "and said unto him, Why dost thou not go in?" This regards the external call by the ministry of the word, to the outward duties of religion, to

means of grace; to give credit to the doctrines, and to attend the ordinances of the Gospel.

29 And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

He answering, and commending himself, and reflecting on his Father: said,

Lo, these many years do I serve thee] For though he was called a son, yet differed little from a servant; he was of a servile disposition, and under a spirit of bondage; he served his Father, not in the Gospel, but in the Law, moral and ceremonial; in the letter of it, and not in the newness of the Spirit; externally, and not internally; from fear, and not from love; with mercenary views, and not freely; with trust in, and dependence on his service, seeking justification and eternal life by it, and not with a view to the glory of God; and this he had done *many years*; from his youth upwards, as the Pharisee in *Matt. xix. 20.* whereas his younger brother had never served him, but his own lusts; and yet as soon as ever he was come home, before he could enter upon service, this entertainment was made for him, and which he therefore resented: moreover, he does not say I have served thee, but *I do*; denoting the continuance and constancy of his service; and intimating that his life had been, and was one continued series of obedience:

Neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment] Which, though true of the elect angels, can never be said of any of the sons of men; and which shows that he had never been under a work of the Spirit of God, who convinces of sin; and had never seen himself in a true light, in the glass of that law he pretended to serve God in; that he was a stranger to the plague of his own heart, and was a self-deceiver, and the truth of grace was not in him: he could not be a good man, for so to say, is contrary to the experience of all good men; to their groans, complaints, and confessions; to their prayers, for fresh application of pardoning grace; and to the observation of all wise and good men in all ages; and most fully proves him to be a Pharisee:

And yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends] Some by a *kid*, or *goat*, as Theophylact, understand a persecutor, as Saul was of David, and Ahab of Elijah; and so means that God had not delivered up such an one into his hands; or took him away by death, that he might have some peace and rest, amidst his labours and service; and others understand this of the Jews desiring Barabbas, a *goat*, and not Jesus, the *Lamb* of God; but his meaning seems to be, that he had

E e

never

never received any favour in proportion to the services he had done; and so charges his Father with ingratitude.

30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

He will not own him in the relation of a *brother*, though the Father had owned him in that of a son; and the offence he took was, that the fatted calf should be killed, or that a crucified Christ should be preached; that he should be preached at all, and much less that he should be preached to sinners; and still less that he should be preached so soon to them, as soon as ever they became sensible of their sin, as it was the will of his Father it should be: for such are not to be sent away to cleanse themselves from sin by any thing they do, and then apply to Christ; or to heal themselves, and then come to him for a cure; or to get peace by doing so, and then come to him for rest; or to do any thing to fit themselves for him, for their case requires present help: now at this the self-righteous man is displeased. The elder brother would have had another method taken with this younger son: he would have had him soundly whipped with the rod of the law, for his former sins; and sent into the fields along with him to work out his salvation; and not to have a rag put upon him, or a shoe on his foot, or a morsel of bread given him, till he had earned them. But, instead of this, to be received and entertained in the manner he was, and so soon, highly provoked him: for he thought such a conduct was unbecoming God, and his moral perfections; and what his brother was undeserving of; and opened a door to licentiousness; and highly reflected on his services, as of no value and regard.

Which hath devoured thy living] What was given to his son; that part of his goods he had divided to him, *ŷ. 12, 13.*

With harlots] In rioting and drunkenness, in chambering and wantonness, in gluttony and debauchery:

Thou hast killed for him the fatted calf] See the note on *ŷ. 23.*

31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

For a son he was, as before observed, by creation, national adoption and profession:

Thou art ever with me] Not in such a sense as Christ the Son of God was: nor can it design the gracious presence of God, or communion with him; for this man did not *walk with God*; and besides, this is more frequently expressed by God's being with his people, than by their being with

him; nor are good men always with God, or God with them; in this sense: sometimes the phrase designs the saints being with God, or Christ, in heaven; but here it intends only attendance on public worship, in the place where the symbol of God's presence was, the temple; and the *ever* denotes the term of the legal dispensation, which in many branches of it, as circumcision, the passover, and other ordinances and statutes, is said to be *for ever*.

And all that I have is thine] Which must be understood with a limitation; for it cannot mean, that he had all the perfections of God, as Christ the Son of God has; nor all spiritual blessings, as the adopted sons of God have; nor indeed any of them; but all the outward ordinances of the legal dispensation, which belonged to the Jews; particularly those that are enumerated in *Romans ix. 4, 5.* as the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, the promises, their descent from the fathers, and the Messiah's descent from them; they had him in person among them, and his personal ministry, the word and ordinances of the Gospel; and had as much as they could have, or desired to have, in an external way.

32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

It was meet that both Father, son, and servants should make merry: see the notes on *ŷ. 23, 24.* and this elder brother also, because of the relation he stood in to him: and if he had had the same spiritual affection the apostle had for his *brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh*, *Romans ix. 3.* and chapter *x. 1.* he would have rejoiced at the conversion and return of sinners by repentance:

And be glad] As his Father was, and the angels in heaven be; see *ŷ. 10.*

For this thy brother] Though he would not own him as such,

Was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found] See the note on *ŷ. 24.* And so the parable is concluded, the elder brother being silenced, and having nothing to say against such strong reasoning.

CHAP. XVI.

In this chapter, by the similitude of an unjust steward, Christ exhorteth them to make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, ŷ. 1—12. He reproveth the covetous Pharisee, ŷ. 14, 15. Teacheth that the law must be fulfilled to a tittle, ŷ. 16, 17. The parable of the rich man and poor Lazarus, ŷ. 18—31.

1 AND

1 AND he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

The Syriac version adds, "a parable," as the following is; and which is directed to the disciples, as those in the preceding chapter are to the Pharisees; and who also are designed in this; tho' it is particularly spoken to the disciples, because it might be of some use to them, with respect to the stewardship they were in. The Persic and Ethiopic versions read, "Jesus, or the Lord Jesus said;" and which is to be understood, though not expressed; for the parable was delivered by him, and is as follows:

There was a certain rich man] By whom God is meant, who is rich in the perfections of his nature, in the works of his hands, in his government, and the administration of it, in providential goodness, and in the large revenues of glory due to him from his creatures; for all temporal riches are from him; and so are all the riches of mercy, grace, and glory:

Which had a steward] By whom is designed, not all mankind; for though all men are, in a sense, stewards under God, and are entrusted with the good things of life, the gifts of nature, endowments of mind, health, strength of body, time, &c. yet all cannot be meant, because some are distinguished from this steward, *ψ. 5, 8.* nor are the disciples intended, though the parable is directed to them; and they were *stewards of the mysteries and manifold grace of God*; and one among them was an unfaithful one, and was turned out of his stewardship; but the character of an unjust man will not suit with them: and besides, this steward was of *the children of this world, ψ. 8.* but the Pharisees are meant; for these are taken notice of as graverled at this parable, *ψ. 14, 15.* and to them agrees the character of *the men of this world*, who were worldly wise men; as also that of a steward; these are the tutors and governors mentioned in *Galatians iv. 2.* who had the care of the house of Israel, the family of God, under the legal dispensation; and to whom were committed the oracles of God, the writings of Moses and the prophets; and whose business it was to open and explain them to the people.

And the same was accused unto him, that he had wasted his goods] Put false glosses upon the scriptures; fed the family with bad and unwholesome food, the traditions of the elders, called *the leaven of the Pharisees*; made havock of the souls of men; and made the hearts of the righteous sad; and hardened sinners in their wicked ways; and fed themselves, and not the flock; and plundered persons

of their temporal substance; of all which they were accused by Moses, in whom they trusted; by his law, which they violated; and by their own consciences, which witnessed against them; and by the cries of those whom they abused, which came into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.

He called him by the prophets, sent one after another; by John the Baptist, by Christ himself, and by his apostles:

And said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee?] Of thy corrupting the word; of thy covetousness, rapine, and theft; of thy adultery and idolatry, and sad violation of the law? See *Romans ii. 21—23.*

Give an account of thy stewardship] What improvement is made of thy gifts; what care has been taken of my vineyard, the Jewish church; and where are the fruits that might be expected to have been received at your hands:

For thou mayest be no longer steward] This was foretold by the prophets, that God would write a *Leammi* upon the people of the Jews; that he would cut off three shepherds in one month, and particularly lay aside the idol-shepherd; by whom the Pharisees may be meant, *Zech. xi. 8, 17.* and by John the Baptist, who declared the ax was laid to the root of the tree, and it was just ready to be cut down, *Matt. iii. 11, 12.* and by Christ, that the kingdom of God should be taken from them, *Matt. xxi. 43.* and by the apostles, who turned from them to the Gentiles, *Acts xiii. 46.*

3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.

As the scribes and Pharisees were wont to do, *Matt. iii. 9.* and *ix. 2.* *Luke vii. 39, 49.*

What shall I do?] He does not say, what will become of me? I am undone, and what shall I do to be saved? or what shall I do for my Lord and Master I have so much injured? or what shall I do to make up matters with him? or what account shall I give? but what shall I do for a maintenance? how shall I live? what shall I do to please men, and gain their opinion and good-will, and so be provided for by them? Of this cast were the Pharisees, men-pleasers, and self-seekers:

For my lord taketh away from me the stewardship] The priesthood was changed, and there was a change also of the law; the ceremonial law was

abrogated, and the ordinances of the former dispensation were shaken and removed; so that these men must of course turn out of their places and offices:

I cannot dig] Or *plough*, as the Arabic version renders it; or do any part of husbandry, particularly that which lies in manuring and cultivating the earth; not but that he was able to do it; but he could not tell how to submit to such a mean, as well as laborious way of life; for nothing was meaner among the Jews than husbandry: they have a saying, that *אומנות פחותה מן חקוקת* "you have no trade, or business, lesser or meaner than husbandry (a):"

And to beg I am ashamed] For nothing could be more disagreeable to one who had lived so well in his master's house, and in so much fulness and luxury, as the scribes and Pharisees did. The Jews have a saying, that (b) "Want of necessities, *טוב משאלתו* "is better than begging;" (and "says one) I have tasted the bitterness of all things, "and I have not found any thing more bitter than "begging:" and which was literally true of the Jews, after the destruction of Jerusalem; when multitudes of them were condemned to work in the mines; and vast numbers were scattered about every where as vagabonds, begging their bread; both which were very irksome to that people: though both these phrases may be mystically understood: and *digging* may intend a laborious searching into the scriptures, and a diligent performance of good works; neither of which the Pharisees much cared for, though they made large pretensions to both; nor did they dig deep to lay a good foundation, whereon to build eternal life and happiness; nor could they attain to the law of righteousness by all their toil and labour, they would be thought to have taken: and as for *begging*, they were above that; read the Pharisee's prayer in *Luke* xviii. 11, 12. and you will not find one petition in it to ask any thing at the throne of grace, in a way of mere grace and favour, without merit; or to beg any thing at the hands of Christ, as life, righteousness, pardon, cleansing, healing, food, &c. they were ashamed of that, and cared not for it.

4 I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

Or, "I know what to do;" I have a scheme in my head, and I am determined to execute it, which will provide for me, and secure me a maintenance;

That, when I am put out of the stewardship]

(a) T. B. b. Yebamot, fol. 63. 1.

(b) Mischlar Haganimim spud Euxori. Florileg. Heb. p. 162.

Drove from Jerusalem, and from the temple and the synagogues:

They may receive me into their houses] Either Jews or Gentiles, after their dispersion.

5 So he called every one of his lord's debtors *unto him*, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

Either the Gentiles, who were greatly indebted to God, having sinned against him, and the law, and light of nature, at a great rate; into whose affection, houses and palaces, the Jews found ways and means to introduce themselves; and, in process of time, got leave to have synagogues built, and their worship set up again: or else the Jews, their countrymen; since these were under those stewards, tutors, and governors, and were debtors to do the whole law; and had, by breaking the law, contracted large debts; and against whom the ceremonial law stood as an handwriting: these the steward called

Unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?] And it is observable, that the debts of these men, of the first, lay in *oil*, and of the other in *wheat*; things much used in the ceremonial law, in the observance of which they had been greatly deficient; see *Exod.* xxix. 40, 41. *Numbers* xv. 4—12. *Ezekiel* xlv. 13, 14.

6 And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

Or, *an hundred baths of oil*, the same quantity as in *Ezra* vii. 22. where Aben Ezra (c) calls them, *measures*, as we do here; and Jarchi (d) observes, that they were, *לבול מנחה* "to mingle" with the meat-offerings; which illustrates the above observation, that they were for the temple service; and the bath was the measure of oil, as the ephah was of wheat (e); and they were both of the same quantity, *Ezek.* xlv. 11. According to Godwin (f) it held four gallons and a half; so that a hundred of them contained four hundred and fifty gallons; though some make the measure much larger. Some say the *bath* held six gallons, one pottle, and half a pint; and others, seven gallons, two quarts, and half a pint; and others, nine gallons, and three quarts.

Take thy bill] Or *writing*; which shewed the bargain made for so many measures; and which acknowledged the receipt of them, and promised payment:

And

(c) In *Ezra* vii. 22.

(d) In *ibid.*

(e) Kimchi in *Ezek.*

xlv. 14.

(f) Moles & Aaron, l. 6. c. 9.

And sit down quickly] For his case required haste;
And write fifty] Just half; that it might appear he had bought but fifty, and was accountable for no more.

7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

How much owest thou to my lord? as before:

And he said, An hundred measures of wheat] Or, *cors of wheat*; the same with *homers*, Ezek. xlv. 14. the same quantity as in *Ezra* vii. 22. where, as here, they are called an hundred measures of wheat; and were, as Jarchi on the place observes, למנחה "for the meat-offerings:" according to the above writer (e), this measure held five bushels and five gallons; so that the whole was five hundred sixty bushels and an half: some make the measure to hold eight bushels and a half; and others, fourteen bushels and a pottle, which greatly increases the quantity.

And he said unto him, Take thy bill and write fourscore] The *Perfic* version reads *seventy*. Inasmuch now as oil and wheat were things expended in the observance of the ceremonial law, and these mens debts lay in them, it may have regard to the deficiency of the Jews in these things: wherefore by *the bill* may be meant the law; and which is sometimes called by the same name as here, γραμμα, the *writing*, or *letter*, 2 Cor. iii. 6. Rom. ii. 29. and chapter vii. 6. and is so called, not merely because it was written in letters; but because it is a mere letter, shewing only what is to be done and avoided, without giving strength to perform, or pointing where it is to be had; and it is so, as obeyed by an unregenerate man; and as abstracted from the spirituality of it; and as weak, and without efficacy to quicken, justify, or sanctify: and whereas the steward, the scribes and Pharisees, ordered the debtors to write a lesser sum; this may regard the lessening, and even laying aside of many things in the law, after the destruction of the temple; as particularly the daily sacrifice, and other things; see *Dan.* ix. 27. *Hos.* iii. 4. and the doctrine of the Pharisees was always a curtailing of the law, and making less of it than it was; as appears from the glosses they put upon it, refuted by our Lord in *Matthew* v. They compounded the matter with the people, as some men do now, and taught them, that an imperfect righteousness would do in the room of a perfect one; a doctrine very pleasing to men, and which never fails of gaining an access into the hearts and houses of carnal men; though very injurious to God, and to his divine perfections, par-

ticularly his justice and holiness; as the methods this steward took were unjust to his lord, though very agreeable to his debtors, and were well calculated to answer the end he proposed, an after-provision for himself. I am much indebted to a learned writer (f), whose name is in the margin, for several thoughts and hints in the explanation of this parable; and also of that of the rich man and Lazarus, in the latter part of this chapter.

8 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

Not the Lord Jesus Christ, who delivered this parable, as the Syriac version seems to suggest, rendering it, *our Lord*; but the lord of the steward, or *God*, as the Ethiopic version reads: not that he commended him for the fact he did, or the injustice of it; for this is contrary to his nature and perfections; but for his craft and cunning in providing himself a maintenance for time to come: for he is on that account branded as an *unjust steward*, as he was, in wasting his lord's goods; putting false glosses on the scriptures; doing damage both to the souls and worldly estates of men; and in neglecting and despising lawful and honest ways of living, by digging or begging, asking favours at the hand of God, and doing good works; and in falsifying accounts; breaking the least of the commandments, and teaching men so to do; and in corrupting others, making proselytes twofold more the children of hell than himself; and in being liberal with another's property, to wrong objects, and for a wrong end. It was not therefore because he had done justly to his lord, or right to others, that he is commended; but *because he had done wisely* for himself: the wit, and not the goodness of the man, is commended; which, in the language and sense of the Jews, may be thus expressed (g): "Be-
 "cause a man, עשה טוב לעצמו "does good for
 "himself with mammon which is not his own."

For the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light] By *the children of this world* may be meant the Israelites, who belonged to the Jewish nation and church, called *the world*, and *this world*, 1 Cor. x. 11. and chapter ii. 6, 8. especially the princes of it, the ecclesiastical doctors and rulers: and who also were the men of this present world; in general they were such who were, as they were born into the world; in their sins, in the pollution, and under the guilt of them; were carnal, in the flesh, or unregenerate, and in darkness.

(e) Moles & Aaron, 1. 6. c. 9.

(f) Teilmanni Specimen Explicat. Parabolarum.

(g) T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 121. 1.

ness, and blindness: they were such as were not only *in* the world, but *of* it; they belonged to it, having never been called out of it; and were under the influence of the god of it; and were taken with the things of it, its riches, honours, and pleasures; and had their portion in it, and were of worldly spirits: all which agrees with the scribes and Pharisees; see *Psaln* xvii. 14. and Aben Ezra on it, who has the very phrase here used: *אִישׁ דְּעֵלְמָא* "a man of the world," is sometimes (*b*) distinguished from a scholar, or a wise man; but *בְּנֵי עֵלְמָא* "the children of the world," as they frequently intend the inhabitants of the world (*i*), are sometimes distinguished from *בְּנֵי עֵלְמָא דְּמַלְאכָא* "a son of the world to come (*k*);" and from "the children of faith (*l*)," the same as the *children of light* here; by whom are meant the children of the Gospel-dispensation; or persons enlightened by the Spirit and grace of God to see the sinfulness of sin, and their wretched state by nature; the insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify them before God; the way of life, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; who see that the several parts of salvation, and the whole, are of grace; have some light into the scriptures of truth, and doctrines of the Gospel; and a glimpse of heaven, and the unseen glories of another world, though attended with much darkness in the present state; and who shall enjoy the light of glory. Now, the men of the world, or carnal men, are, generally speaking, wiser than these; not in things spiritual, but in things natural, in the affairs of life, in worldly matters. The phrase seems to answer to *דורוֹת* generations, used in *Gen.* vi. 9. and chap. xxxvii. 2. *these are the generations of Noah*, &c. and *the generations of Jacob*; by which are meant, not the genealogies of them, but their affairs; what befel them in life: and so the Jewish writers (*m*) explain the phrase by *דְּקִרְוָא* "the things which happened unto them in this world," in the course of their pilgrimage: or they are wiser, *וְהֵם יָדְעוּ לְעֵלְמָא דְּהַיְוָה*, "for their own generation;" for the temporal good of their posterity, than saints are for the spiritual good of theirs: or they are wiser for the time that is to come in this life, than good men are concerning themselves for the time to come in the other world: or they are wiser, and more prudent in disposing of their worldly substance for their own secular good, and that of their offspring, than men of spiritual light and knowledge are in disposing of their worldly substance for the glory of God, the interest of Christ, the honour of re-

ligion, their own spiritual good, and that of their posterity.

9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

These are the words of Christ, as are also the latter part of the preceding verse, accommodating and applying the parable to his disciples, and for their instruction:

Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness] By *mammon* are designed riches, wealth, and substance; see the note on *Matt.* vi. 24. and is called *mammon of unrighteousness*, because such wealth is often unrighteously detained, and is not made use of to right and good purposes by the owners of it; or because, generally speaking, it is possessed by unrighteous men; and, for the most part, used in an unrighteous manner, in luxury, pride, and intemperance; and is the root, instrument, and means of much unrighteousness: or it may be rendered, *mammon of hurt*, or *hurtful mammon*; as it often is to those who are over-anxious and desirous of it, or either disuse or misuse it: or, at best of all, *mammon of falsehood*, or *deceitful mammon*; so in the Targum (*n*) frequent mention is made of, *מַמְוֹן שְׁקֶר* "mammon of falsity;" and stands opposed to *true riches*, in *ψ.* 11. for worldly riches are very empty and fallacious; wherefore deceitfulness is ascribed to them; and they are called uncertain riches, which are not to be depended upon, *Matt.* xiii. 22. *1 Tim.* vi. 17. unless it should be rather thought that it is so called, because gotten in an unrighteous way; as it was by Zaccheus, and might be by Matthew, one of the disciples, Christ now speaks to; and the publicans and sinners, who were lately become his followers, and whom he advises, as the highest piece of wisdom and prudence, to dispose of it in such a manner, as of it to *make themselves friends*; not God, Father, Son, and Spirit. These indeed are friends to the saints, but they are not made so by money; reconciliation and redemption are not procured this way; nor is the favour of the judge to be got by such means; the only means of reconciliation, are the blood and death of Christ; though indeed acts of beneficence, rightly performed, are well pleasing to God: nor are the angels meant, who are very friendly to all good men; nor rich men, to whom riches are not to be given, *Prov.* xxii. 16. but rather riches themselves, which, if not rightly used, and so made friends of, will cry, and be a witness against

(b) T. Bab. Bava Metsia, fol. 27. 2. (i) Zohar in Exod. fol. 26. 2. & 58. 3. 4. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 99. 3. & 101. 2. & 102. 4. Kimchi in Isa. 47. 19. (k) Zohar in Exod. fol. 59. 4. (l) Zohar in Numb. fol. 50. 4. (m) Aben Ezra in Gen. vi. 9. & xxxvii. 2. Sol. Urbin Ohel Moed, fol. 85. 1.

(n) Targum in Job xxviii. 8. & in Isa. v. 23. & xxxiii. 15. & in Ezek. xxii. 27. & in Hos. v. 11.

against the owners of them, *James v. 1—3.* though it may be the poor saints are intended; who by their prayers are capable of doing either a great deal of hurt, or a great deal of good; and it is the interest of rich men to make them their friends:

That when ye fail] Of money; or *that fails*, as the Ethiopic version reads; or rather, when ye leave that, that is, when ye die: so in *Jer. xlii. 22.* know certainly that ye shall die; the Septuagint renders it, *καταψαλῖς*, “ye shall fail by the sword,” &c.

They may receive you into everlasting habitations] The mansions of glory, which are many, and of an eternal duration: this is to be understood of their being received thither, not by the poor, to whom they have been benefactors; for though these may now pray for their reception to glory when they die, and will hereafter rejoice at their reception thither; yet they themselves will not be receivers of them, or their introducers into the everlasting tents, or tabernacles: nor are the angels intended, who carry the souls of the righteous into Abraham’s bosom, and will gather the elect together at the last day; for not they, but God and Christ receive the saints to glory: the words may be rendered impersonally, *you may be received*; in a way of well-doing, though not for it: mention is made of the everlasting tabernacles, in *2 Esdras ii. 11.* and so the phrase may be rendered here, as opposed to the earthly and perishing tabernacles of the body, *2 Cor. v. 1. 2 Peter i. 13, 14.*

10 He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much.

Faithful in quantity and quality, especially the latter; in that which is of little value and worth, at least when compared with other things:

Is faithful also in much] In matters of greater consequence and importance: the sense of the proverb is, that generally speaking, a man that acts a faithful part in a small trust committed to him, does so likewise in a much larger; and being tried, and found faithful in things of less moment, he is intrusted with things of greater importance. Tho’ this is not always the case: for sometimes a man may behave with great integrity in lesser matters, on purpose that he might gain greater confidence, which, when he has obtained, he abuses in the vilest manner; but because it is usually otherwise, our Lord uses the common proverb; and of like sense is the following;

And he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much] That man who acts the unfaithful part in a small matter, and of little worth, generally does the same if a greater trust is committed to him.

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

This is the application of the above proverbial expressions, and seems to be directed to the disciples of Christ, though not without a view to the covetous scribes and Pharisees, who were in hearing of it, and were disturbed at it, *Mat. 23. 14.* and the meaning is, that whereas some of them might have been unfaithful, and have acted the unjust part in gathering of riches, as Matthew, and other publicans, that were now become the followers of Christ; if therefore they should be unfaithful

In the unrighteous mammon] In the disposing of it to improper uses, which was either unrighteously gotten, and therefore called, as it sometimes was, *ממון זרע* “mammon of ungodliness, or un-“godly mammon (a);” or, which was fallacious, deceitful, vain, and transitory:

Who will commit to your trust the true riches?] Or mammon? That is, how should you expect to be entrusted with the riches of grace, as the blessings and promises of the covenant of grace, the graces of the Spirit of God, which truly enrich persons, and are solid and durable? or the riches of glory, the better and more enduring substance in heaven, signified by a kingdom, and an inheritance that fadeth not away? So the Jews call the good things of another world, and say (p), that “All the good things of this world are not, *ממון טוב* “true good things,” in comparison of the “good things of the world to come.” And they use the same distinction with respect to mammon, as here: “The holy, blessed God, they say (q), “gives him, *ממון של אמת* “mammon of truth, or “true mammon;” and he makes it, *ממון שקר* “false, “or deceitful:” or rather, the rich treasure of the Gospel is meant, called a treasure in earthen vessels, and the unsearchable riches of Christ; and is comparable to, and of more worth than gold, silver, and precious stones. And so the Syriac version renders it, “Who will trust you with the truth?” With the truth of the Gospel.

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who shall give you that which is your own?

Which is not a man’s own, but what is committed to him by another; *בממון אחרים* “with “the mammon of others (r),” to speak in the language of the Jews; and of mammon our Lord is speaking, and here of another man’s, of which they

(a) Targum in *Hab. ii. 9.* (p) Tzeror Hammor, fol. 23. 2.
(q) *Shemot Rabba*, §. 31. fol. 134. 4. (r) *Jorchi in Pirke*
Abot, c. 5. §. 13.

they were only stewards, as he in the preceding parable was: hence we read (s) of שומרי ממון "keepers of mammon," who were entrusted with another's substance; and such are here supposed, which, if unfaithful in,

Who shall give you that which is your own?] That is, Should you unjustly detain, or make an ill use of another man's substance lodged in your hands, how can you expect but that you will be dealt with in like manner by others, who will not pay you yours, they have in their possession, but convert it to their own use? Interpreters generally understand by *that which is another man's*, in the first clause, the things of this world, which men are possessed of, because these are not of themselves, but from another, from God; and they are but stewards, rather than proprietors of them; and they are for the good of others, and not for themselves; and are not lasting, but in a little while will pass from them to others: and by *that which is your own*, they understand the good things of grace and glory, which, when once bestowed on a man, are his own property, and for his own use, and will never be alienated from him, but will always abide with him: but if he is unfaithful in the former, how should he expect the latter to be given to him?

13 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

See the note on *Matt. vi. 24.*

14 ¶ And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.

Covetous, or lovers of money, the love of which is the root of all evil; and that they were, is evident from their devouring widows houses, under a pretence of making long prayers for them, *Matthew xxiii. 14.*

Heard all these things] As well as the disciples, being in company with them, chapter xv. 2. even the parable concerning the unjust steward, and the application of it; and the directions given about using the things of this world, and distributing of them to the poor, and shewing a greater concern for riches of an higher nature:

And they derided him] Turned up their nose, or drew it out to him, as the word signifies, in a sneering way; they rejected and despised what he said about their injustice in their stewardship; the calling of them to an account for it; and the

turning of them out of it; and concerning the true use of worldly riches, and the contempt of them; they looked upon themselves safe and secure in the good opinion of the people, and happy in the enjoyment of worldly things; and looked upon him as a weak man, to talk in the manner he did.

15 And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God.

That is, Jesus said unto them, as the Syriac and Perfic versions express it:

Ye are they which justify yourselves before men] From the sins of injustice, unfaithfulness, covetousness, and all others; and would be thought, and appear to be righteous; but it is only in the sight of men, who can only see the outside of things, and judge thereby:

But God knoweth your hearts] And what is in them; the deceitfulness, hypocrisy, covetousness, and cruelty of them, which are hid from the eyes of men:

For that which is highly esteemed among men] Or what is high in the account and esteem of men, as the outward appearance of these men for morality, religion, and holiness; their zeal for the ceremonies of the law, and the traditions of the elders:

Is abomination in the sight of God] Who knew full well from what principles, and with what views they acted, to gain popular applause, and amass riches to themselves, without any concern for the glory of God, and the good of men; see *Isa. lxxv. 5.*

16 The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

Till the time that John the Baptist began his ministry; for till then, the law and the prophets, with the *Hagiographa*, or holy writings, (for into these three parts, the Jews divided the books of the Old Testament) were the only writings they had; and which contained the whole of the revelation granted to them; and which they wrested, and put false glosses on; and therefore it was no wonder that they derided Christ, and despised his ministry: and whereas spiritual things were promised in these writings, under the notion of temporal ones; which they not understanding, might imagine the doctrine of Christ concerning the contempt of worldly riches was contrary to: and since they valued themselves on having the law and the prophets, Christ observes, that.

(s) T. Hi. rof. Succs, fol. 53. 1.

Since that time the kingdom of God is preached] The Gospel, and the mysteries of it, relating to the kingdom of the Messiah, his person, office, and grace; and to the kingdom of grace, which lies not in outward, but in inward and spiritual things; and to the kingdom of heaven, or glory hereafter, and which is a superior dispensation to that of the law and the prophets, and sets things in a clearer, plainer, and better light;

And every man presseth into it] The Gospel-dispensation, the kingdom of the Messiah; "that he may enter into it," as the Syriac and Persian versions add; which the scribes and Pharisees did all they could to hinder; see *Matt.* xxiii. 13. large multitudes crowded to the ministry of John, of Christ, and of his apostles; the people flocked in great numbers to hear the word, and seemed disposed to embrace the doctrines of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; they pressed on one another to hear it, and through many difficulties, discouragements, and obstacles, which the Pharisees threw in their way. There was scarce a man but seemed very desirous of attending upon the preaching of it, and pressed hard for it; and with much force and violence, with great eagerness and endeavour broke his way to it; though a different sense is given by others reading the words; and "every one suffers violence to himself for it," as the Arabic version; or "is oppressed for it," as the Ethiopic; that is, suffers reproach, contradiction, and persecution, for the sake of hearing it.

17 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

This is said by Christ, lest it should be thought, by his saying that *the law and the prophets were until John*, that they were no longer, nor of any more use; but were now abrogated and laid aside; whereas heaven and earth might sooner pass away, and the whole frame of nature be dissolved,

Than one tittle of the law to fail] Which, and the prophets, in all the precepts, promises, types, figures, prophecies, &c. thereof, had their full accomplishment in the person, miracles, obedience sufferings, and death of Christ; see *Matt.* v. 18.

18 Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery.

Divorceth her, for any other cause than for adultery, as the Jews used to do upon every trifling occasion, and for every little disgust: by which instance our Lord shews, how the Jews abused and depraved the law, and, as much as in them lay,

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caused it to fail; and how he, on the other hand, was so far from destroying and making it of none effect, that he maintained the purity and spirituality of it; putting them in mind of what he had formerly said, and of many other things of the like kind along with it; how that if a man divorces his wife, for any thing else but the defiling his bed,

And marrieth another, committeth adultery] With her that he marries; because his marriage with the former still continues, and cannot be made void by such a divorce:

And whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband] The phrase *from her husband*, is omitted in the Syriac and Persian versions;

Committeth adultery] With her that he marries, because, notwithstanding her husband's divorce of her, and his after-marriage with her, she still remains his lawful and proper wife; see the note on *Matt.* v. 32. The Ethiopic version reads this last clause quite different from all others, thus, "and whosoever puts away her husband, and joins to another, commits adultery," agreeable to *Mark* x. 12. see the note there.

19 ¶ There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

In Beza's most ancient copy, and in another manuscript of his, it is read by way of preface, "He said also another parable;" which shows, that this is not a history of matter of fact, or an historical account of two such persons, as the rich man and the beggar, who had lately lived at Jerusalem; though the Papists pretend, to this day, to point out the very spot of ground in Jerusalem where this rich man's house stood: nor is it to be understood parabolically of any particular rich man or prince, as Saul, the first king of Israel; or Herod, who now was reigning, and was clothed in purple, and lived in a sumptuous manner: nor of rich men in general, though it greatly describes the characters of such, at least of many of them; who only take care of their bodies, and neglect their souls; adorn and pamper them, live in pleasure, and grow wanton, and have no regard to the poor saints; and when they die go to hell; for their riches will not profit them in a day of wrath, nor deliver from it, or be regarded by the judge; any more than hills and mountains will hide them from his face: but by the *rich man* are meant the Jews in general; for that this man is represented, and to be considered as a Jew, is evident from Abraham being his father, and his calling him so, and Abraham again calling him his son, *Gen.* 24. 25. of which relation the Jews much boasted and gloried

F f in;

in; and from his brethren having Moses and the prophets, *ŷ. 29.* which were peculiar to the Jewish people; and from that invincible and incurable infidelity in them, that *they would not believe, though one rose from the dead, ŷ. 31.* as the Jews would not believe in Christ, though he himself rose from the dead, which was the sign he gave them of his being the Messiah: and the general design of the parable is to expose the wickedness and unbelief of the Jews, and to shew their danger and misery, for their contempt and rejection of the Messiah: and particularly the Pharisees are designed, who being covetous, had derided Christ for what he had before said; and, who though high in the esteem of men, *were an abomination to God, ŷ. 14, 15.* These more especially boasted of Abraham being their father; and of their being the disciples of Moses, and trusted in him, and in his law; and thought they should have eternal life through having and reading the books of Moses and the prophets: these may be called *a man*, because this was the name by which the Jews stile themselves, in distinction from the Gentiles, whom they compare to *beasts*; see the note on *Matt. xv. 26.* and this they ground on a passage in *Ezek. xxxiv. 31.* *And ye, my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men;* upon which their note is (s), "Ye are called, *אדם men*, but the nations "of the earth are not called men." And they may be called *a certain man*, a famous man, a man of note; as the Jews, and especially the Pharisees, thought themselves to be; and therefore coveted the chief places in the synagogues, and at feasts, and loved salutations and greetings in market-places, and to be called of men *Rabbi*, and master: as also a *rich man*; for the Jews in general were a wealthy people, lived in a very fruitful country, and were greatly indulged with the riches of providential goodness; and particularly the Pharisees, many of whom were of the great sanhedrim, and rulers of synagogues, and elders of the people; and who, by various methods, amassed to themselves great riches, and even devoured widows houses; see *Luke vi. 24.* and chap. *xviii. 18, 23.* and they were also rich in outward means and ordinances, having the oracles of God, his word, worship, and service: and as to their spiritual and eternal estate, in their own esteem: though they were not truly rich in grace, nor in faith, nor in spiritual knowledge, nor even in good works, of which they so much boasted; but in appearance, and in their own conceit, they were rich in the knowledge of the law, and in righteousness, which they imagined was perfect, and so stood in need of nothing; no, not of repentance, and especially of Christ, or of any thing from him:

Which was clothed in purple and fine linen] Or

byssus, which is said to (t) grow on a tree in height equal to a poplar, and in leaves like a willow, and was brought out of India into Egypt, and much used there, as it also was among the Jews: hence we often read (u) of, *לבוש בייסוס* or *לבוש בייסוס* "garments of byssus," or *fine linen*: the Jews in general dressed well; their common apparel were fine linen and silk; see *Ezek. xvi. 10, 13.* and so the Arabic version here renders it, "silk and purple;" and the Persian version, "silks and bombazines;" and the priests particularly, were arrayed in such a habit; the robe of the ephod, and also its curious girdle, were of blue, purple, scarlet, and fine linen; and at the hem of it were pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet, *Exod. xxviii. 6, 8, 33.* And as for the Pharisees, they loved to go in long robes, and to make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, which were fringes of blue, joined unto them; and which may figuratively express the fine outside show of holiness and righteousness, they made;

And sated sumptuously every day] The Jews in common lived well, being in a land that flowed with milk and honey; see *Ezek. xvi. 13.* and especially the priests, who offered up lambs every day, besides other offerings, of which they had their part; as also the Pharisees, who were often at feasts, where they loved the chief places: and this may signify the easy and jocund life they lived; knowing no sorrow upon spiritual accounts, having no sense of sin, nor sight of the spirituality of the law, nor view of danger; but at perfect ease, and not emptied from vessel to vessel.

20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

By whom is designed, not any particular beggar in the times of Christ, that went by this name; though there were such persons in Israel, and in the times of our Lord; as *blind Bartimeus*, and others: nor David, in the times of Saul, who was poor and needy; and who sometimes wanted bread, and at a certain time went to Abimelech for some: nor the godly poor in common, though the heirs of the heavenly kingdom are, generally speaking, the poor of this world; these receive Christ and his Gospel, and have their evil things here, and their good things hereafter; they are now slighted and neglected by men, but shall hereafter have a place in Abraham's bosom, and be for ever with the Lord: nor are the Gentiles intended; though they may be said to be poor and helpless, as they were without

(t) T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 114. 2. & Kimchi in loc.

(u) Philostrat. Vit. Appollon. l. 2. c. 9. (u) Targum in Gen. 25. 42. in 2 Chron. v. & in Ezek. xlv. 17.

without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise, and without hope and God in the world; and were despised and rejected by the Jews, and not suffered to come into their temple, and were called and treated as dogs; though, as the Syrophœnician woman pleaded, *the dogs might eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table*; and who, upon the breaking down of the middle wall of partition, were called by grace, and drawn to Christ, and were blessed with faithful Abraham, and made to sit down with him in the kingdom of heaven: but our Lord Jesus Christ himself is here meant; as appears from the cause and occasion of this parable, which was the derision of Christ by the covetous Pharisees, who, though high in the esteem of men, were an abomination to God; and from the scope and design of it, which is to represent the mean and despicable condition of Christ in this world; whilst the Pharisees, his enemies, lived in great pomp and splendor; and the exaltation of Christ hereafter, when they would be in the utmost distress: and also the infidelity of that people, who continued in their unbelief, notwithstanding the resurrection of Christ from the dead: the name *Lazarus* well agrees with him. The Syriac version calls him *Loozar*, as if it signified one that was helpless, that had no help, but wanted it, and so a fit name for a beggar; and well suits with Christ, who *looked, and there was none to help*, Isa. lxiii. 5. nor did he receive any help from men; though rather, the word is the contraction of *Eleazar*, and so the Ethiopic version reads it here: and it is easy to observe, that he who is called R. Eleazar in the Babylonian Talmud, is in the Jerusalem called, times without number, ר' לעזר R. Lazar (x); and R. Liezer, is put for R. Eliezer. It is a rule given by one of the Jewish writers (y), that "In the Jerusalem Talmud, wherever R. Eleazar is written without an *aleph*, R. Lazar ben Azariah is intended." And Christ may very well be called by this name; since this was the name of one of his types, *Eleazar* the son of Aaron, and of one of his ancestors, who is mentioned in his genealogy, *Matt. i. 15.* and especially as the name signifies, that *the Lord was his helper*; see *Exod. xviii. 4.* Help was promised him by God, and he expected it, and firmly believed he should have it, and accordingly he had it; God did help him in a day of salvation: and which was no indication of weakness in him; who is the mighty God, and mighty to save; but of the Father's regard to him as man, and mediator; and of the concern that each of the divine persons had for, and in man's salvation: and on account of his circumstances of

life, he might be called *אנאס*, a poor man, as he is in *2 Cor. viii. 9.* and frequently in prophecy; see *Psal. xxxiv. 6.* and *xl. 17.* and *xli. 1.* and *lxix. 29.* *Ecc. ix. 14.* *Isa. lxvi. 2.* *Zeck. ix. 9.* And though by assuming human nature he did not cease to be God, or lose the riches of his divine nature and perfections, yet his divine perfections, and the glory of them, were much hid and covered in his state of humiliation; and he was much the reverse of many of them in his human nature; in which he was exposed to much outward poverty and meanness: he was born of poor parents; had no liberal education; was brought up to a trade; had not a foot of ground to call his own, nor where to lay his head; and lived upon the ministrations of others to him; and when he died, had nothing to bequeath his mother, but left her to the care of a disciple: and he is further described by his posture and situation,

Which was laid at his gate] That is, at the rich man's, as is expressed in the Syriac, Persian, and Ethiopic versions: this was the place where beggars stood, or were laid, and asked alms; hence is that rule with the Jews (z), and in many other places the following phrase; "If a man dies and leaves sons and daughters—if he leaves but a small substance, the daughters shall be taken care of, and the sons, יְשִׁמְלוּ עַל הַפְּתָחוֹת "shall beg at the gates." This denotes the rejection of Christ by the Jews; he came to them, and they received him not; he had no entrance into their hearts, and was admitted but into few of their houses; they put those that confessed him out of their synagogues; and caused him himself to depart out of some of their cities; they delivered him up unto the Gentiles that were without; and at last led him without the gate of Jerusalem, where he suffered:

Full of sores] So Nahum Gamizu (a) is said to have his whole body, מְלֵא שִׁרָיו "full of ulcers:" sometimes the Jewish phrase, which answers to the word here used is, מְכַרֵּם שִׁרָיו "one stricken with ulcers (b);" and this by the commentators (c), is explained of a leprous person; so one of the names of the Messiah is with the Jews (d) מְכַרֵּם which signifies leprous; in proof of which, they produce *Isa. liii. 4.* Surely he hath born our griefs, &c. By these sores may be meant, sins; see *Psal. xxxviii. 5, 7.* *Isa. i. 6.* Christ was holy and righteous in himself, in his nature, life, and conversation; he was without both original and actual sin; yet he was in the likeness of sinful flesh, and was reproached and calumniated

(x) T. Hieros. Bicurim, fol. 63. 3, 4. & 64. 1. & 65. 3, 4. & Sheviith, fol. 36. 3. & passim. (y) Juchasin, fol. 81. 2.

(z) Mifn. Bava Bathra, c. 9. §. 1. & T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 140. 2. Pitke Tosaph. in Cetubot, art. 133, 372.

(a) T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 21. 1.

(b) Mifn. Cetubot, c. 3. §. 5. & 7. 10.

(c) Maimon. & Bartenora in ibid. (d) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 98. 2.

luminated by men as a sinner; and had, really and actually, all the sins of his people on him, by imputation; and *was made even sin itself, for them*; so that in this sense he might be said to be full of them, though in himself he was free from them: they may also intend the temptations of Satan, those fiery darts which were flung at him, and by which he suffered; as also the reproaches and persecutions of men, which attended him more or less, from the cradle to the cross; together with all his other sorrows and sufferings, being scourged, buffeted, and beaten, and wounded for our sins, and bruised for our transgressions; of which wounds and bruises he might be said to be full.

21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

To be fed with the offal food, broken bread, fragments of meat; that food which falls from the knife or plate in eating, and from thence on the ground; and, literally understood, may express the low condition Christ was in, in his human nature: he assumed a true body, like to ours, and partook of the same flesh and blood with us, and was liable to the same infirmities as ours, which are finless; and among the rest, was subject to hunger and thirst, and was obliged to the ministrations of others for a subsistence: and it may also express his contentment in such a condition; he never murmured at the providence of God, but was entirely resigned to his will; he did not desire to live in fulness and affluence, but avoided and shunned every step that led unto it; nor did he envy the plenty of others, and was fully satisfied with his meanness; nor did he ever work a miracle for the sake of feeding himself. Moreover, the words being understood mystically, may design the elect of God among the Jews, who, like crumbs, were few in number, a seed, a remnant according to the election of grace: there were but few among them that were chosen of God, and effectually called by his grace; and but a little flock to whom he gave the kingdom; and a small number, who entered in at the strait gate, and were saved; and these few were very mean and despicable for their outward poverty; for the poor had the Gospel preached to them, and they received it, when the rich, and the rulers of the people, rejected it: and they were like crumbs for their small degree of worldly wisdom and knowledge, being babes, simple and foolish, who followed Christ, while the learned, wise, and prudent despised him; and for their sinfulness and vileness, being, generally speaking, notorious sinners, publicans and harlots; and of these it may be said what follows,

Which fell from the rich man's table] Being originally of the Jews, but separated from them by the grace of God, and rejected by them with scorn and contempt. These Christ desired; see *Cant. vii. 10.* his desire was towards them from everlasting, when he asked them of his Father, and they were given to him; and it was not only after their persons, but after their salvation, and that both in eternity and in time; and which he signified by various words and actions: and it is towards them, while in a state of unregeneracy, that they may be converted, and believe in him; and when they are called, he delights in the grace he puts in them, and in the righteousness he puts upon them; he takes pleasure in their company; he desires them for his habitation; he stands at the door and knocks for admission to them; and nothing is he more earnestly solicitous for, and eager after, than their being with him in glory to all eternity; and his end in all, is, *to be fed or satisfied with them*; see *Isai. liii. 11.* he came into the world to gather these scattered crumbs and fragments together; it was his meat and drink, to work out their salvation; and it will be his highest joy and pleasure to present them to his Father and himself compleat and perfect, and introduce them into his kingdom and glory; he will be fully satisfied in them, and they in him, *when they shall awake in his likeness*. Then will all Christ's desires, prayers, and intercessions, have their full accomplishment. The Vulgate Latin adds, "and no man gave to him;" which seems to be transcribed from chapter xv. 16. and is not supported by any copy or version.

Moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores] By the dogs are meant, not the Jews, though they are sometimes so called, and especially the scribes and Pharisees, *Psal. xxii. 16, 20. Isai. lvi. 10, 11. Phil. iii. 2.* for these made his sores and wounds, or were the authors of his sorrows and sufferings; but rather the Gentiles, who were so called by the Jews; see the note on *Matt. xv. 26.* because they were unclean by the law, and had in the greatest contempt by the Jews; and for their barbarity, malice, and cruelty, *Deut. xxiii. 18. 1 Sam. xxiv. 14. 2 Kings viii. 12, 13.* The Gentiles were by the Jews esteemed unclean, and unfit either for civil or religious conversation; and were treated as aliens by them; and were indeed, in their heathenish state, barbarous and inhuman, and lived in malice, hateful, and hating one another: these, some of them, came to Christ in person, as the Centurion, and Syrophenician woman, many of the Samaritans, who, with the Jews, were all one as heathens, and several Grecians at the feast; and many of them also came to him by faith, through the ministry of his servants, under the influence of

of divine grace, and that according to various prophecies in the Old Testament, concerning the calling and gathering of the Gentiles to him: these embraced a crucified Christ; and fed upon the slain Lamb of God; eat his flesh, and drank his blood; stretched forth the hand of faith, and thrust it into his bleeding wounds; and lived by faith on him, who was wounded and bruised for their sins, and whose blood was shed for the remission of them.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

The death of Christ was not a casual thing, a fortuitous event; it came to pass, it was agreed unto, and settled in the covenant of grace; it was spoken of by the prophets of the Old Testament; it was typified by the sacrifices of the law, and other things; it was foretold by Christ himself, and was the end of his coming into this world, wherein the great love, both of him and of his Father, is expressed; and is the main article of the christian faith; so that this came to pass according to the decrees of God, the counsel, and covenant of peace, the will of Christ, and his predictions, and as the accomplishment of the law and prophets: it was not a natural, but a violent death which Christ died; and yet it was both voluntary and necessary; it was but once, and is of an eternal efficacy, and is *a sacrifice acceptable to God*; it was not for himself, or any sin of his, who knew none; nor for the angels, and their redemption, whose nature he did not assume; but for men, and for their sins. Christ died not merely as an example to them, or only to confirm his doctrines; but as a substitute, in the room and stead of his people; to atone for their sins, and satisfy divine justice; to procure the pardon of them in a way of justice; to take them away, and utterly abolish them; to bring in an everlasting righteousness; to obtain eternal redemption, and bring such nigh to God who were afar off; and that men might live through him now, and have eternal life by him hereafter:

And was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom By *Abraham's bosom* is meant *heaven*, a phrase well-known to the Jews, by which they commonly expressed the happiness of the future state. Of Abraham's happy state they had no doubt; and when they spake of the happiness of another's, they sometimes signified it by *going to Abraham*; as when the mother of the seven sons, slain by Cæsar, saw her youngest going to be sacrificed (f) "She fell upon him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and said

"unto him, "My son, אברהם אבינו לך אצל אברהם אבינו, and tell him, thus "go to Abraham your father, and tell him, thus "faith my mother, &c." and sometimes, as here, by being in his bosom. So it is said (g), that Eliezer his servant, (Abraham's, the same name with Lazarus) מונה בחיקו "is laid in his bosom:" and which may refer to the account in the Talmud (h), that "When R. Benaah, the painter of "caves, came to the cave of Abraham, he found "Eliezer, the servant of Abraham, דקאי קמיה "standing before him." And it is also said (i) of Rabbi, when he died, יושב בחיקו של אברהם, "this day he sits in the bosom of Abraham;" for as it was usual with them to represent the joys of heaven by a feast; so the partaking of them, by sitting down at a table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; see Matt. viii. 12. and as their manner at meals was by lying along on couches at eating; he that lay next another might be said to lie, or lean, in his bosom: hence *Abraham's bosom* came to signify the near and intimate enjoyment of happiness with him in the other world. The ascension of Christ is expressed by a being *carried up into heaven*, Luke xxiv. 51. and here he is entered, and has been received, and will be retained, *until the time of the restitution of all things*; here he is glorified in human nature, sits at the right hand of God, and appears in his presence, on the behalf of his people; and indeed, the ends of his going there, were to receive gifts for them, to be their advocate and intercessor, to take possession of heaven in their name, and prepare that for them, and them for that; and hither he was *carried by angels*: these were the chariots in which he rode; and these the guard that attended him, when he was seen, looked upon, and gazed at by them with adoration, faith, and wonder; which shows the ministration of angels to him, and seems to set forth the glory and magnificence in which he ascended. And this agrees with the notions of the Jews, that when good men die their souls are immediately received by angels, and taken under their care, and carried to heaven. So one of their paraphrases (k), having mentioned the garden of Eden, which is but another name for *heaven* with them, adds, "Into which no man "can enter but the righteous, whose souls are "carried thither, ביד מלאכים, "in the hand, or by "the means of angels." And elsewhere they (l) say, "With the Shekinah come three ministering "angels to receive the soul of a righteous man." Particularly it is said of Moses, at the time of his death (m); that "The holy, blessed God descend-

"ed

(g) In Sepher Emanah, c. 1. p. 20.

fol. 58. 1.

fol. 75. 2.

(h) T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 72. 2. Juchasin,

fol. 75. 2.

(i) Targum in Cant. iv. 12.

(j) Midrash Haneelam in Zohar in Gen. fol. 65. 1.

(m) Debarim Rabba, §. 11. fol. 245. 4.

(f) Echa Rabbati, fol. 49. 4.

"ed from the highest heavens, to take the soul of " Moses, and three ministering angels with him." And sometimes they say (*n*), not only three angels, but three companies of angels attend at such a time: their words are these; "When a righteous man " departs out of the world, three companies of " ministering angels meet him; one says to him, " Come in peace;" and another says, "Walking " in his uprightness;" and the other says, "He " shall enter into peace," &c. No mention is made in this parable of the burial of this man, nor any words used expressive of it, or that in the least hint it. The reason is, because Christ lay so short a time in the grave, and he was not left there, nor did he see corruption; but in a very little while was raised from the dead, and delivered from the power of the grave; when, after some stay on earth, he was attended by angels to the highest heavens: for this is to be understood, not of his soul being had to paradise immediately upon his separation from the body; but of his ascension to heaven after his resurrection, when he was escorted by angels thither.

The rich man also died] This may be understood both of the natural death of the scribes and Pharisees; who, though they were dignified persons, were as gods, yet were mortal, and died like men; see *Psal.* lxxxii. 6, 7. compared with *John* x. 34, 35. and they died in their sins, in their unbelief of the Messiah, and so were damned in their impenitence and hardness of heart: for as they thought they needed no repentance, they were not called unto it: and in the sin against the Holy Ghost, blaspheming the miracles of Christ done by him, and which was a *sin unto death*; and under the power and guilt of all their other sins, and so were lost and perished. And it may also be understood of the political and ecclesiastical death of the Jewish people; which lay in the destruction of the city of Jerusalem, and of the temple, and in the abolition of the temple-worship, and of the whole ceremonial law. A *to-ammi* was written upon their church-state, and the covenant between God and them was broken; the Gospel was removed from them, which was as death; as the return of it, and their call by it, will be as life from the dead; as well as their place and nation, their civil power and authority were taken away from them by the Romans; and a death of afflictions, by captivity and calamities of every kind, have attended them ever since. And it is to be observed, that Lazarus died before the rich man, as Christ died before the destruction of the Jewish polity and church-state: the city and sanctuary were not destroyed, nor the daily sacrifice made to cease, nor the consummation, and that determined, poured upon the desolate, until

some time after the Messiah was cut off, according to the prophecy in *Daniel* vii. 26, 27. Moreover, no mention is made of the rich man being *carried by angels*, as Lazarus was; and if he was, he was carried, not by the good, but by the evil angels, and not into Abraham's bosom, but to hell. So the Jews (*o*) say, "If a soul is worthy, how many " holy troops, or companies, are ready to join it, " and bring it up into paradise? But if not worthy, how many strange troops are ready to bring " it in the way of hell? These are the troops " of the destroying angels." However, this is said of him, as is not of Lazarus.

And was buried] As wicked men are, when sometimes the saints are not; see *Ecc.* viii. 10. *Psal.* lxxix. 2, 3. The scribes and Pharisees, who were so diligent to build and garnish the sepulchres of the prophets, among their other instances of pride and vanity, took care, no doubt, to provide and erect stately monuments for themselves; and who were buried in great pomp and splendor. Though this may respect their church-state, service, and ceremonies, which received their death's blow at the crucifixion of Christ, but remained for some time unburied, it being with difficulty that these things were got under the feet of the church; and may also refer to the political state of the Jews, who, as a nation, are represented as in their graves, where they are to this day, and will be until they shall be turned unto the Lord; when they shall be brought out of their graves, and shall live and return to their own land, *Ezek.* xxxvii. 12—14. The Vulgate Latin adds, *in hell*; but this belongs to the following verse.

23 And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

Which place may design the place of torment, and the miserable state the scribes and Pharisees, as all wicked men, enter immediately into upon death, *Psal.* ix. 17. who in their lifetime were blind, and are called blind guides, blind watchmen, blind leaders of the blind, and who were given up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart; but in hell their eyes are opened, and they see their mistakes about the Messiah, and find themselves in torments, under dreadful gnawings, and remorse of conscience; and having a terrible sensation of divine wrath, *their worm dies not, and their fire is not quenched*: or this may regard the vengeance of God on the Jews, at the destruction of Jerusalem; when a fire was kindled against their land, and burned to the lowest hell; and consumed the earth with her increase, and set on fire

(*n*) T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 104. 4.

(*o*) Zohar in Exod. fol. 39. 3.

fire the foundations of the mountains; and the whole land became brimstone, salt, and burning; and they were rooted out of it in anger, wrath, and great indignation; see *Deut. xxix. 23, 27, 28.* and chapter xxxii. 22. or rather, the dreadful calamities which came upon them in the times of Adrian at Bithur; when their false Messiah, Bar Cochab, was taken and slain, and such multitudes of them were destroyed in the most miserable manner (q); when that people, who before had their eyes darkened, and a spirit of slumber and stupidity fallen upon them, in those calamities began to be under some convictions:

And seeth Abraham afar off] The covenant of circumcision given to him, and to them his natural seed, now of no use to them; their descent from him, of which they boasted, and in which they trusted, now of no avail; and he in the kingdom of heaven, and themselves thrust out; see *Luke xiii. 28.*

And Lazarus in his bosom] They now found the Messiah was come, and was gone to heaven, whither they could not come, *John vii. 33, 34.* The Jews are convinced that the Messiah is born, tho' not revealed; and they sometimes confess, that he was born the same day Jerusalem was destroyed; and sometimes they say, he sits at the gates of Rome among the lepers, and at other times, that he is in the walks of paradise (r). This is said in agreement with the notions of the Jews, that wicked men will see the righteous in happiness, and themselves in torment; by which the latter will be aggravated, to which the allusion is; for the say (s), "The gates of paradise are fixed overagainst the gates of hell, so that they can see the righteous in rest, and themselves in distress."

24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

The Jews used to call Abraham their father, and were proud of their descent from him, *Matt. iii. 9. John viii. 33, 39.* and so persons are after death represented by them, as speaking to, and discoursing with him; as in the passage cited in the note on *v. 22.* to which the following may be added (t); "Says R. Jonathan, 'From whence does it appear that the dead discourse with each other? It is said, *Deut. xxxiv. 4. And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I swore unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying,*

&c. what is the meaning of the word *saying*? 'The holy blessed God said to Moses, *Go say to Abraham, &c.*' And here the Jews, in their distress, are represented as applying to him, saying,

Have mercy on me, and send Lazarus] Which seems to have respect to the mercy promised to Abraham, the covenant made with him, and the oath sworn unto him, to send the Messiah, *Luke i. 72, 73.* and which now, too late, these wretched Jews plead, the Messiah being sent already:

That he may dip the tip of his finger in water] In allusion to the washings and purifications among the Jews, and the sprinkling of blood by the finger of the high priest; which were typical of cleansing, pardon, comfort, and refreshment, by the grace and blood of Christ:

And cool my tongue] Which had spoken so many scurrilous and blasphemous things of Christ; saying that he was a sinner, a glutton, and a wine-bibber, a Samaritan, and had a devil; that he cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils; and that he was a seditious person, and guilty of blasphemy. So the Jews represent persons in hell, desirous of cooling water, and as sometimes favoured with it, and sometimes not. They say (u), he that reads *Keriat Shema*, (that is, *Hear, O Israel, &c.*) and very accurately examines the letters of it, מונון "they cool hell for him;" as it is said, *Psal. lxxviii. 14.* And elsewhere (x), they speak of "a disciple, or good man, that was seen after death amidst gardens, and orchards, and fountains of water; and of a publican, or wicked man, seen standing by the bank of a river, seeking, מים מים מים מים "to come to the water, but could not come at it." So Mahomet (y) has a passage, that is somewhat like to this text; "The inhabitants of hell-fire, shall call to the inhabitants of paradise, saying, Pour upon us some water, or of those refreshments God hath bestowed on you." This man could not so much as get a drop of water to cool his tongue, not the least refreshment, nor mitigation of the anguish of his conscience, for the sins of his tongue:

For I am tormented in this flame] In the destruction of Jerusalem, and calamities at Bithur, and other afflictions; together with the wrath of God poured into the conscience, and the bitter remorses of that, for speaking against the Messiah; and which are still greater in hell, *where the worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched.*

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things,

(q) Vid. Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud. col. 372.

(r) Synagog. Jud. c. 50. T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 98. 1. Aben Ezra in Cant. vii. 5. T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 5. 1.

(s) Tzeror Haimor, fol. 125. 3.

(t) T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 18. 2.

(u) T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 15. 2.

(x) T. Hieros. Sanhedrim, fol. 23. 3. & Chagigah, fol. 77. 4.

(y) Koran, c. 7. p. 121.

things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

Abraham calls him *son*, not in a spiritual sense; he was not one of Abraham's spiritual seed, that trod in the steps of his faith; but because he was so according to the flesh; and in return to his calling him *father*: good men have not always good children, nor is any trust to be put in birth and parentage:

Remember, that thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things] Temporal good things; a land flowing with milk and honey; all the outward blessings of life that could be wished for the Jews had, whilst they were in their own land; and also ecclesiastical good things, as the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises, the fathers, and the Messiah according to the flesh, even all external privileges and ordinances, *Rom. ix. 4, 5.*

And likewise Lazarus evil things] Christ was surrounded with the infirmities of human nature, he assumed; was attended with much outward meanness and poverty; was loaded with calumnies and reproaches; and followed with the wrath, hatred, and persecution of men; and suffered many evil things, as buffetings, scourging, spitting, and cruel mockings, and at last death itself:

But now he is comforted] See *Psalms xvi. 9—11*, compared with *Acts ii. 25—28*. Christ being raised from the dead, and set in human nature at the right hand of God, is comforted with the presence of God, which for a while he was deprived of, when on the cross; and is delighted with the glory that is put upon him as man; and with pleasure sees the travail of his soul continually, his elect and redeemed ones, called and gathered by the grace of God, who are his jewels, his portion, and goodly heritage:

And thou art tormented] As were many of the Jews, his implacable enemies and persecutors, in hell, and others in captivity, bondage, and distress.

26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

Besides the different circumstances of each, both past and present, which should be observed and considered:

Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed] As this may regard the state of the Pharisees after death, it intends not the natural distance between

heaven and hell; though there may be an allusion to the notions of the Jews concerning that, who on those words in *Ecc. vii. 14. God hath set the one over against the other*; say (x), "This is hell and paradise; what space is there between them?" "An hand's-breadth. R. Jochanan says, A wall; but the Rabbans say, They are both of them even, so that they may look out of one into another." Which passage is cited a little differently (a), thus; "Wherefore did the holy blessed God create hell and paradise? That they might be one against another. What space is there between them? R. Jochanan says, A wall; and R. Acha says, An hand's-breadth; but the Rabbans say, Two fingers." And elsewhere it is said (b), "Know that hell and paradise are near to one another, and one house separates between them; and paradise is on the north-east side, and hell on the north-west." Mahomet seems to have borrowed this notion from them, who says (c), "Between the blessed and the damned, there shall be a vail; and men shall stand on *Al Araf*, (the name of the wall or partition, that shall separate paradise from hell) who shall know every one of them by their mouths." But not this natural space, be it what it will, but the immutable decree of God is intended here, which has unalterably fixed the state of the damned, and of the blessed:

So that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence] Not that those in heaven can desire to go to those in hell; though those in hell may wish to be in heaven; but the sense is, that by this irrevocable decree of God, the saints in heaven are eternally happy, and the wicked in hell eternally miserable. And this also agrees with the notions of the Jews (d), who represent it impossible for a man, after he has descended into hell, to come up from thence any more: but as this may regard the Jews state of captivity and affliction, since the destruction of their city and temple, upon, and for the rejection of the Messiah; it may denote the impossibility of Christ's coming again upon the same errand he came on before, to be a Saviour of sinners, and a sacrifice for sin; and of the Jews believing in him, so long as they lie under the spirit of slumber, and are given up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart.

27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

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(x) Midrash Kohelet, fol. 76. 1.

Orat. 1. §. 12, fol. 31. 1.

(c) Koran, c. 7. p. 120.

(a) Nishmat Chayim

(b) Razi, fol. 15. 1.

(d) Capiton, fol. 70. 2.

The Cambridge copy of Beza's, and the Ethiopic version read, "father Abraham;" finding he could have no redress of his misery, nor any relief for himself, he applies to Abraham in behalf of others:

That thou wouldst send him to my father's house] The house of Israel and Jacob, the surviving Jews: and this agrees also with a notion of theirs, that the dead seek for mercy for them (e). The Persian and Ethiopic versions read, *that thou wouldst send Lazarus, &c.* whom the one calls *Gazzarus*, and the other *Eleazar*.

28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

Meaning his brethren and countrymen, according to the flesh; who when he was alive, stood in such a relation to him; said to be *five*, in allusion it may be to the children of Israel coming out of Egypt, חמשה "by fives, or five in a rank," *Exod. xiii. 18.* as a learned man (f) conjectures, to whom I am beholden for several hints, in the explanation of this parable; and certain it is, that these five brethren were Jews, since they had the writings of Moses and the prophets with them, *℣. 29.* Wherefore I shall venture to propose another conjecture, though it may be liable to exception, as all conjectures usually are: it is plain that there were *six* brethren in all; let it be observed then, that the Jewish nation were usually divided into *three* parts, *priests, Levites, and Israelites*; of these three the great sanhedrim usually consisted (g); and these read the law every sabbath-day; first a priest, then a Levite, and then five Israelites (h); (let that number also be remarked;) now these were again divided into *three* sects, Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. The former of these, are represented in this parable; this I only propose, I lay no stress on it: it may be, that the twice *five*, or ten tribes of Israel, which were not known where they were, nor are they to this day, may be designed by a synecdoche of a part for the whole; whose return the Jews are yet expecting, and for whose welfare they are greatly concerned.

That he may testify unto them] That is *preach* unto them, as the word is used in *Acts ii. 40.* and chapter *x. 42.* and *xx. 21, 24.* Christ, when here on earth, did *testify* to that people of their sins, shewed them the heinousness of them, inveighed against them, and reproved for them; and of their righteousness, and shewed the hypocrisy,

deficiency, and insufficiency of it to justify them; of himself, as the Messiah; of truth in general; and of their ruin, temporal and eternal: but he had now finished his testimony, and which, though faithful, was not heard nor received by them: the reason of this request is,

Lest they also come into this place of torment] As hell is, and which these brethren of his, he left behind, were deserving of, and in danger of coming into: and his concern for them did not arise from any regard to Christ, and the enlargement of his interest; nor from any love to his testimony, the Gospel; nor from any real notion or desire of converting grace for his brethren; nor from true love to them; but from a selfish principle, lest his own torments should be aggravated by their coming: this, as it may regard the Jews in their affliction, and if the *ten* tribes should be meant by the *five* brethren, may design the very passionate concern the Jews had, and still have for them, who yet to this day hope for the return of them; see Manasseh ben Israel's book, called *Spes Israelis*.

29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

In reply to this his request, Abraham said,

They have Moses and the prophets] That is, their writings; which shews this man and his five brethren to be Jews; for to them were the oracles of God committed; and these had the writings of Moses and the prophets read to them every sabbath-day; and is true, whether the contemporaries and immediate successors of the Pharisees are meant, or the ten tribes: and also shews, that one view of the parable is to establish the authority of these writings; see *℣. 16, 17.* and that it is a peculiar privilege to have them; and that they ought to be attended to and regarded:

Let them hear them] For they testified concerning Christ: and concerning the sins of the Jews, and the calamities, both temporal and eternal, that should come upon them; and which testimony was sufficient, to leave them without excuse: and indeed, the word of God, read, explained, and heard, is the ordinary means of conversion, or of bringing men to faith and repentance.

30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

He contradicts his father Abraham, or at least desires it might not be so; this way he suggests, was not so right, and would not succeed; for he knew his brethren were a rebellious and stiff-necked people, and would not hear Moses and the prophets, notwithstanding all their outward boast of them, and pretensions of regard to them:

(e) T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 16. 1.

(f) Teelmannus.

(g) Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrim, c. 2. §. 2.

(h) Ibid. Hilchot Tephilla, c. 12. §. 16.

But if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent] But, alas! repentance is not of man's will, but a gift of God's grace; nor could these men repent, because, in a judicial way, their eyes were shut, their ears were stopped, and their hearts were hardened; and though Christ came in person to them, and preached, as never man did, with power and authority, and confirmed his doctrine with miracles, yet they repented not; nor did they when he arose from the dead.

31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

That is, "Abraham said unto him," as the Syriac, Persian, and Ethiopic versions express it:

If they hear not Moses and the prophets] As they did not, nor regarded what they said of Christ, but disbelieved both him and them:

Neither will they be persuaded] Or brought to repent and believe:

Though one rose from the dead] As Christ did; whose resurrection, the truth of it they endeavoured to baffle, stifle, and suppress: this was the sign Christ gave them of the truth of his Messiahship; and yet they repented not of what they had done to him, that they might believe in him; but remained still in their impenitence and infidelity, and so died. This shews the regard that ought to be had to the written word, as read, or preached; and that it is a sad sign of a desperate condition, when men reject divine revelation. Beza's ancient copy adds, "and should go unto them."

C H A P. XVII.

In this chapter we have some particular discourses of Christ with his disciples, in which he deborteth them from giving offence, ψ . 1, 2. and admonisheth them to forgive one another, ψ . 3, 4. He encourageth them to pray for the increase of their faith, with a description of the power thereof, ψ . 5, 6. Ten lepers are cleansed, whereof one only is thankful, and he a Samaritan, ψ . 7—19. He telleth them in what manner his kingdom should come, ψ . 20—25. A description of the last times, compared with those of Noah and Lot, ψ . 26—37.

THEN said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but *wo unto him through whom they come.*

In the Alexandrian copy, and in three of Beza's Exemplars it is read, "his disciples;" and so read the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions; that is, "Jesus said to his disciples," what

follows, as the Syriac and Persian versions express, and the latter reads, he said *again*. About the time that he delivered the above parable concerning the rich man and Lazarus, he repeated to his disciples what he had before said to them on another occasion, *Matt.* xviii. 7.

It is impossible but that offences will come] Considering the decree of God, the malice of Satan, the wickedness of men, and the corruption both of their principles and practices. The Ethiopic version renders it, "temptation will come;" that which will be trying to the faith of the saints, and a stumblingblock to weak minds; as reproach and persecution, errors and heresies, and the evil lives of professors:

But wo unto him through whom they come] See the note on *Matt.* xviii. 7.

2 It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

See the notes on *Matt.* xviii. 6. and on *Mark* ix. 42.

3 ¶ Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

Or, "take heed to one another," that ye neither give, nor take offence. Take heed to your spirits, to your doctrines, walk, and conversation, that you give no offence to any, and that you are not stumbled by what you shall see in, and meet with from others:

If thy brother trespass against thee] See the note on *Matt.* xviii. 15.

Rebuke him] Privately, and proceed according to the rules there directed to; lay his sin before him; endeavour not only to convince him of the fact, but of the evil of it; how contrary to the will of God; how unbecoming the Gospel of Christ, and the profession he makes; how hurtful to himself, as well as injurious to his brother; and how such evils give the enemy occasion to reproach the saints, to speak evil of the ways of God, and blaspheme the name and doctrines of Christ, and harden sinners in their sins, as well as stumble weak christians, and sadden the hearts of the righteous.

And if he repent] If he is made sensible of his evil, and is truly sorry for it, and ingenuously acknowledges it:

Forgive him] The injury committed against a man's self; and pray to God for him, for an application of his pardoning grace and mercy to him; and

and comfort him with the hope of forgiveness with God, by the gracious promises and declarations of pardon made to such persons; drop all resentment and anger, and behave towards him with all sweetness of temper, and affability, and respect: and this is to be done immediately, as soon as a man repents: and so say the Jews (a); "Says R. Chana bar Papa, Whoever commits a thing, and repents of it, they forgive him directly; as it is said, *Mal. iii. 5. and fear not me*; lo, they that fear me, forgive immediately." Such were reckoned good men, men fearing God.

4 And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

For good men are frequently apt to fall into sin, and offend both God and man; see *Prov. xxiv. 16*.

And seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent] As often as he sins, and appears to be truly sensible of it, and humble for it, and makes acknowledgment of it; and not only barely in words professes his concern for it, but there is reason to believe that he is heartily grieved for it, and to hope that he will behave better for the future:

Thou shalt forgive him] This seems to be occasioned by Peter's putting such a question to Christ, how often a brother might sin against him, and he forgive him; see *Matt. xviii. 21, 22*. The Jews plead (b) for great tenderness and readiness to forgive penitents, when they ask for forgiveness; which they insist upon should be done: and who "ever makes haste to forgive, is praise-worthy." But then, they say (c), "If he brings all the rams of Nebaioth that are in the world, he is not to have pardon, unless he asks it of him." And they seem also to have set times for it, as well as restrain the frequent repetition of it: they observe (d); "If a man returns by repentance, in the intermediate time, (that is, as the gloss explains it, between the beginning of the year, or new-year's day, and the day of atonement) they pardon him; but if he does not return in the intermediate time, though he brings all the rams of Nebaioth in the world, they do not pardon him." A man that was always forgiving, was reckoned by them an extraordinary man: it is said (e) of Mar Zutra bar Nachman, "That he was, מוהל בכל" "forgiving every day;" but yet they do not seem to care to carry it to so great a length, and to repeat it so often as our Lord directs; they

allow a man to forgive three times, but not a fourth; see the note on *Matt. xviii. 22*.

5 ¶ And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.

They said this either on account of what was now said by Christ concerning offences, and forgiving injuries; being conscious to themselves of their own weakness to withstand temptations; and fearful lest they should be stumbled and offended with what they should meet with; or that they should give offence to others; and being also sensible of what spirits they were of, and of the difficulties of conquering them, and mastering the resentment of their minds, when injured and provoked; and also the necessity of divine assistance, of having fresh supplies of grace, and of having their graces, and particularly faith, strengthened, and drawn into a lively exercise; or on account of their not being able to cast out a devil from one that was possessed, *Matt. xvii. 19, 20*. when words, to the same purpose, were spoken by Christ, as in the following verse; on occasion of one or other of these, though more likely the former, the apostles addressed Christ in this manner,

Increase our faith] Both the faith of working miracles, and the grace of believing in him: by which, as they express their sense of the weakness and imperfection of their faith, and their great desire to have it increased, which might be for their comfort and his glory; so they acknowledge his divine power, and that he is the author and finisher of faith; and that as the beginning, so the increase of it is from him: wherefore faith is not of a man's self, or the produce of man's free-will and power, but is the gift of God; and even where it is, it is not in man to increase it, or add to it, or to draw it forth into exercise; this also is the operation of God. And if the apostles had need to put up such a petition to Christ, much more reason have other men.

6 And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.

Jesus said, in answer to the disciples. The Syriac version leaves out the word *Lord*; and the Persian version, in the room of it, reads *Jesus*:

If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed] See the note on *Matt. xvii. 20*.

Ye might say unto this sycamine tree] Which was near at hand; for in Galilee, where Christ now was, such trees grew, especially in lower Galilee:

(a) T. Bab. Chagig'a, fol. 3. 1.

(b) Maimon. Hilchot

Chobel Umezik, c. 5. §. 10.

(c) T. Bab. Bava Kama,

fol. 92. 1.

(d) T. Bab. Rosh Hashana, fol. 17. 2.

(e) Juchasin, fol. 50. 2.

hence those words (*f*); "From Caphar-Hananiah, and upwards, all the land which does not bear, *קפרי סכימנים*, is upper Galilee; and from Caphar-Hananiah, and downwards, all which does bear *סכימנים*, is lower Galilee." This, by Maimonides (*g*), is said to be a wild fig-tree; but the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it, "the mulberry-tree:" and that the *fig*, *vine* and *mulberry-tree* are the same, Beza shews from Dioscorides, Athenæus, and Galen; though whether it is the same with the *sycamore* in chapter xix. 4. is not certain. The first of these writers makes them to be the same; and the last asserts they are different, and so they should seem by their different names.

Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea, and it should obey you] For such a tree to be plucked up by the root at a word speaking, is very wonderful and miraculous, and beyond the power of nature; and much more for it to remove into the sea, and plant itself there, where trees grow not; and to believe this should be done, and such a word of command obeyed, one should think required very great faith; and yet, if it was but as a grain of mustard-seed, which is very small, it might be done. The design is to shew, what great things are done by faith, and what an increase of it they should have.

7 But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?

In order to keep the disciples humble in the performance of such miraculous works; and that they might not imagine they could have any thing at the hands of God by merit; and to excite them to go on from one duty to another; and never think they have done, or done enough, or more than what is their duty, Christ delivers the following parable;

Which of you having a servant, plowing, or feeding cattle] Or *sheep*, as the Syriac and Persian versions render it; or, "a plowman," or, "a shepherd," as the Ethiopic version; which are both servile works, and done in the field: not that the disciples had any such servants under them, though the words are directed to them, for they had left all, and followed Christ; nor were they brought up to husbandry, but most of them in the fishing trade: Christ only puts this for instance, and supposes such a case:

Will say unto him by and by] Or straightway, immediately, directly,

When he is come from the field] And has done

plowing, and feeding his cattle, sheep, or cows, or whatever they are; as soon as ever he comes home; or *first*, as the Persian version; the first thing he shall say to him, upon his return from thence,

Go] To the other side of the room, and to the table there ready spread, and furnished; or *go up*, as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions render it; go up to the upper room where they used to dine or sup; see *Luke* xvii. 12. or *come in*, as the Persian version renders it; and which some learned men observe, is the sense of the Greek word here used; come into the house,

And sit down to meat] Or fall, or lie down on the couch, as was the custom in those countries at eating.

8 And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink.

Or, "will he not say to him?" It is very likely, it is more agreeable to the language of a master, and the condition of a servant, that he should say to him,

Make ready wherewith I may sup] By dressing the food, spreading the table, and putting the food on it; for it was the business of servants to prepare, as at the passover, see the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 17. so at ordinary suppers:

And gird thyself, and serve me] By giving him drink, or whatsoever he called for; and as they used to wear long garments in those countries, servants girded them up about their loins, that they might be fit for service, expedite in it, and perform it more readily, and with greater ease and dispatch:

Till I have eaten and drunken] Finished his meal:

And afterward thou shalt eat and drink] The Persian and Ethiopic versions read in the imperative, "then eat thou and drink." If he was an Hebrew servant, he eat and drank the same as his master did: for so one of the Jewish canons runs (*b*); "Every Hebrew servant, or handmaid, their master is obliged to make them equal to himself in food and in drink, in clothing and in dwelling, as it is said, *Deut.* xv. 16. *because he is well with thee*: wherefore, thou shalt not eat fine bread; and he eat coarse bread, nor drink old wine, and he drink new wine," &c. And even a Canaanitish servant was to be provided with proper food and drink: they say indeed (*i*), "It is lawful to cause a Canaanitish servant to serve with rigour: yet cause him to eat and drink of all sorts of food and drink;"

(f) Misna Shevuth, c. 9. §. 2.

c. 1. §. 1. & in Bava Bathra, c. 2. §. 11.

(g) In Misna Demai,

(b) Maimon, Hilch. Abadim, c. 1. §. 9. Vid. T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 22, 1.

(i) Maimon, ibid. c. 9. §. 8.

"drink; and the former wise men used to give their servants of all sorts of food that they themselves eat of;" which was using them as they did their Hebrew servants. Yea, it is added; "And they gave their beasts and their servants food, before they eat their own meal;" but this was not commonly done: it does not appear to have been the practice in Christ's time; nor was it necessary.

9 Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not.

Thank him, as if he had done him a favour, and what he was not obliged to:

Because he did the things that were commanded him? For, as a servant, he ought to do them, and in so doing does but his duty: he may indeed be commended for it, but not thanked:

I trow not] Or, "I think not;" it does not seem so to me, as if he would, or as though it was proper and necessary he should. The Ethiopic version leaves out this last clause.

10 So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

This is the accommodation and application of the parable to the disciples of Christ, who, whether ministers or private believers, are as *servants*, and should be as laborious as the plowman, and the shepherd; and as their condition is, so their conduct should be like theirs: the employment of the ministers of the word lies in reading, prayer, meditation, and study; in preaching the word, and administering the ordinances; and in performing other duties of their office: and every private believer has business to do, which lies in the exercise of grace, as the work of faith, the labour of love, and patience of hope; and in the discharge of duty with regard to themselves, in their families, the church, and the world; and these servants should be continually employed; and when one work is done, another is to be taken in hand: saints should be always believing, hoping, waiting, loving, and doing one good work or another; as preaching or praying, reading, hearing, and doing acts of benevolence and charity; and God and Christ are to be served by them in the first place, and then themselves: but some that would be called the servants of Christ, mind their own bellies, and not the service of Christ at all: others in the service of Christ, seek nothing but themselves; others are for the serving themselves first, and then Christ; but the

true servants of Christ serve him in the first place, and seek first his righteousness, and his kingdom, and the honour of it, believing that all other things shall be added to them: and when these have done all that are commanded them, they are not to think their service thank-worthy; as for instance, if the service be preaching the word, a man so employed, ought to be thankful to God that has bestowed ministerial gifts upon him, and makes his labours useful, and uses him as an instrument to do much good to the souls of men, and for his glory, and has put such an honour upon him; but he is not to expect thanks from God, for his most diligent and faithful performance of his work, or imagine that he merits any thing at his hand thereby: or if the business be hearing the word, a man should be thankful to God for the word, ordinances, and ministers; for liberty of waiting upon God in such a way; for health of body, and inclination of mind, for such service; and for all the good, profit and advantage he gains hereby; but he is not to think that he lays God under any obligation to him by so doing, or deserves thanks, or a favour from him, on account of it: or if the employment be prayer, a man should be greatly thankful to the God of all grace, that there is a throne of grace for him to come to; and for a Mediator, who is the way of access to God; and for the assistance of the Spirit in prayer; and for all the blessings which are given, as an answer of prayer: but he is never to entertain such a thought, that God is obliged to him for his prayers, or should thank him for them: or if the work be doing of good with worldly substance, such should be thankful to God for their substance he has given them, and for hearts to make use of it; but ought not to conclude, that they hereby merit his favour, or that this is any gain to him: but on the other hand, Christ directs his disciples, saying,

When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you] As preaching, or hearing, or reading, or praying, and every other act of divine and religious worship; or all acts of justice and benevolence among men; every duty both for matter and manner, as it should be, according to the will of God, from right principles, and to right ends, and by the assistance of the Spirit and grace of God:

Say, We are unprofitable servants] Not in such sense as unregenerate men are, who are *disobedient, and to every good work reprobate and unfit*, Rom. iii. 12. Tit. i. 16, or as the slothful servant, who did not what his Lord commanded; Matt. xxv. 30. Nor is this the sense, that they are unprofitable to men; for they may be, and are, very useful and serviceable to men, and to the saints; but that they are so to God, by whose grace and strength they are

what

what they are, and do what they do; and can give nothing to him but what is his own, and his due; and so can lay him under no obligation to them, nor merit any thing from him; no, not even thanks, and much less heaven and eternal life. The Peric version, quite contrary to the sense of the words, reads, "we are pure, or clean servants, for we have done," &c. and the Ethiopic version leaves out the word *unprofitable*, and reads, "we are servants;" we acknowledge ourselves to be servants:

We have done that which was our duty to do] Wherefore, as diligence is highly proper and reasonable in doing the work of the Lord, humility is necessary, that a man may not arrogate that to himself which doth not belong to him; or boast of his performances; or place any dependence on them; or have his expectations raised on account of them; since when he has done the most and best, he has done but what he should, and what he was obliged to, and in that is greatly deficient. A saying somewhat like this, is used by R. Jochanan ben Zaccai (*k*); "If thou hast learned the law much, do not ascribe the good to thyself; for, for this wast thou created."

11 ¶ And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

That is, Jesus, as the Peric version expresses it; though the Ethiopic version reads in the plural, "they going to Jerusalem passed," &c. that is, the disciples, or Christ with his disciples; who was now going thither to eat his last passover, and suffer and die for his people:

That he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee] Or "between Samaria and Galilee," as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it; he steered his course through the borders of both these countries; and as he passed, Samaria was on his right hand, and Galilee on the left.

12 And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off:

He entered a village, whether in Samaria or Galilee, is not certain; perhaps it bordered on both, since there were both Jews and Samaritans in it, as appears by what follows; and since Christ was passing between both places:

There met him ten men that were lepers] Who either were confined to this place, this village, for they might not be in the larger cities, and walled towns; see the note on *Matt. viii. 2.* or else having heard that Jesus of Nazareth was going to such

a place, got together, and met him as he entered into it, in hope of being cured by him:

Which stood afar off] From Christ, by reason of their uncleanness, as they were obliged to do by the law in *Leviticus xiii. 46.*

13 And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

They spoke together, and cried aloud, being at a distance, that they might be heard; as well as to express their vehement desire, and great importunity to be cleansed; see *Judges ix. 9, 7.*

And said, Jesus, Master] Or *Rabbi*; Jesus, thou great master in Israel; who art a teacher come from God, and who dost surprising miracles, and art able to cure us:

Have mercy on us] And cleanse us from our leprosy; we believe thou art able, if thou wilt: shew compassion to us miserable objects, as they were: their faith was the same with that of the other leper, in *Matt. viii. 2.*

14 And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass that, as they went, they were cleansed.

When upon their loud cry he looked up, and towards them, and saw what a condition they were in, his compassion moved towards them, and he ordered them to do as follows;

Go shew yourselves unto the priests] The Ethiopic version reads in the singular number, "to the priest," as in *Matt. viii. 4.* whose business it was to inspect into this matter, to see whether a person was healed, or no; and if he was, to pronounce him clean, when a gift was offered according to the law in *Leviticus xiv. 2-4.* So careful was Christ that the ceremonial law, which was as yet in force, might be strictly observed: though these ten lepers could not be viewed and examined by the priest together, but one after another; for so is the tradition of the Jews (*l*); "Two leprosy-fies are not looked upon together, whether they be in one man or in two men; but he views one, and either shuts him up, or declares or dismisses him, and then goes to a second."

And it came to pass that, as they went, they were cleansed] Before they came to the priests, whilst they were in the way, they at once found themselves entirely healed of their disease; as Christ very likely gave them reason to believe they should; whereby his power was seen in it; and it was a clear case that it was owing to him, and not to the priests, that they had their cleansing. Of the nature

(*l*) Pirke Abot, c. 2. §. 8.

(*l*) Mifn. Negaum. c. 3. §. 1.

ture of the disease of leprosy, and of the likeness there is between that and *sin*, and of the agreement between the cleansing of a leper, and the cleansing of a sinner by the blood of Christ, see the note on *Luke v. 12*. Here it may be observed, that as these lepers had a cure while they were in the way of their duty, going, as Christ ordered them; so, generally speaking, it is in the way of means, in an attendance on ordinances, that souls receive a spiritual cure from Christ. The man at Bethesda's pool waited long, and had healing at last; it is good to *watch at wisdom's gates, and wait at the posts of her door; faith in Christ, whereby the heart is purified, comes by hearing the word of God.*

15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,

One of them, when he felt perfect soundness in his body, and perceived that he was restored to his health, and saw with his eyes that the leprosy was gone from him, which must be visible enough:

Turned back] Either immediately, before he went to the priests; or afterwards, came back to Jesus, when he had been with them:

And with a loud voice glorified God] Jesus Christ, who is truly God, and whose proper divinity might be seen in this miracle; see *2 Kings v. 7*. Or God the Father, through Christ, and for his sake, by ascribing his cure to his power, and by returning thanks for it, and acknowledging with gratitude Christ to be the author of it; which he did, with as loud a voice as he cried to him for mercy; that all might know the miracle that was wrought, and join in giving glory to Christ: and it was *but one* of them that did so. Gratitude is a rare thing, it is found but in few; unthankfulness cleaves to most persons; it is the general character of men to be unthankful and unholy: multitudes, even all men, share in the providential goodness of God, yet few take notice of, and are thankful for it; God is therefore said to be *good to the unthankful and to the evil*, *Luke vi. 35*. Few there are who are of Jacob's spirit, that judge themselves unworthy of the least of God's mercies, and are heartily thankful for every favour: and this the leper did, when he was sensible that he was healed; no man will seek after a cure, till he sees or is sensible of his sickness and his wound; and when he does, he will inquire after, and make use of the proper means of healing; and when he has got a cure, he is, or at least ought to be, thankful for it: and so it is in spiritual things, *the whole need not a physician*, or see no need of the physician, Christ; *but those who are sick*, and sensible of the sickness of sin, do; and when they perceive that their diseases are healed,

and their sins forgiven, then they call upon their souls, and all within them, to bless the Lord, who has done this for them: and it becomes such who are cured of the leprosy of sin, to glorify God, not only with their mouths, by bringing their offering and sacrifice of praise to him, as the leper by the law was obliged to bring his offering at the time of his cleansing; but by deeds also, with their bodies, and with their spirits; by a holy, humble, and spiritual conversation before men, signified by the leper's washing himself, and clothes, and shaving off all his hair; and by attending on the word and ordinances; by a professed subjection to the Gospel of Christ, signified by the blood being put upon the tip of the right ear of the leper, and on the thumb of his right hand, and on the great toe of his right foot, *Levit. xiv*.

16 And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

For being cleansed, he might draw nigh unto Jesus; and which he did, with the most profound respect unto him, and reverence of him; and having a deep sense of the favour he had received from him, he prostrated himself in this manner before him:

Giving him thanks] Who had shewn compassion to him, had exerted his power on him, and had favoured him with such a singular mercy, as restoring him to health:

And he was a Samaritan] This is particularly remarked by the Evangelist, because the Samaritans were reckoned by the Jews to be ignorant and irreligious persons, and no better than heathens; and yet this man behaved as a religious good man, who had a sense of his mercy, knew his duty, and his obligations, and performed them; when the other nine, who very likely were all Jews, acted a very stupid and ungrateful part.

17 And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?

Jesus said, after the Samaritan had paid his respects to him, and made his acknowledgments in this grateful way:

Were there not ten cleansed?] So many applied for a cure, and so many had it:

But where are the nine?] Or *nine* of them; here was *one*, but where were the rest? They went and showed themselves to the priests, and then returned to their several places of abode, and took no notice of their Physician and Saviour, to make any returns to him. There are many that are cleansed by the blood of Christ; his blood was shed for many for the remission of sins; and by his righteousness he justifies many; at least there are many who profess:

fels themselves to be cleansed by him; and yet there are but few that glorify him, by keeping close to the rule of his word, by giving up themselves to the churches of Christ, and by walking with them in the ordinances of the Gospel: Christ's flock, which is separated from the world, and walks in Gospel-order, within the inclosures of it, is but a little flock; they are but a few names in Sardis, who have not defiled themselves with corruptions in doctrine and discipline; and these few are often such, who have been the worst of men, the vilest of sinners, from whom it has been least expected they should glorify Christ: *publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of heaven*, the Gospel-church-state, embrace its doctrines, and submit to its ordinances, when the scribes and Pharisees, self-righteous persons, do not. Ingratitude is a crime many are guilty of, and it is highly resented by Christ; instances of gratitude are few, but as one in ten; now and then a single Samaritan, a stranger, one that has been a vile sinner, comes and acknowledges the grace of Christ in cleansing him; comes to the ministers of Christ, and to the churches, and tells them what God has done for his soul: but where are the rest, the many others, who have received spiritual advantages, and never come to relate them, and express by words or deeds thankfulness for them?

18 There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

Or it does not appear that any have returned

To give glory to God] For inasmuch as they did not return to give thanks to Christ, and acknowledge him the author of their cure and cleansing, they did not give glory to God:

Save this stranger] For so the Samaritans were reckoned by the Jews, even as the Gentiles, *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise*. Christ speaks in the language and dialect of the nation, and yet we find sometimes that, כורי "a Cuthite," or a Samaritan, is distinguished from, נכרי "a stranger, or a Gentile:" they might set up their beasts in the inns of the Samaritans, but not in the inns of strangers; and a man might let out his bath to a Samaritan, but not to a stranger (*m*); but this must be understood of them in times past, before they were found out to be idolaters; when, as Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel says (*n*), they were as Israelites in all things, and kept the law and the precepts of it, and even more exactly than the Israelites themselves did (*o*); but afterwards a Samaritan was reckoned a Gen-

tile, and so he was in the times of Christ; and therefore he calls a Samaritan a *stranger*: that tradition of the Jews, requires some notice and consideration (*p*); "All are defiled with leprosy, except, חכרים *strangers*, and the proselyte of the gate." And yet here is a stranger among the Jews, and reckoned unclean, on account of leprosy, and sent with them to shew himself to the priest.

19 And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

He said, Arise; for as yet he lay at his feet upon his face, adoring and praising him; nor did he attempt to rise till Jesus bid him: adding,

Go thy way] To thine own country, town, or city, and to thy friends and relations, and about thy business:

Thy faith hath made thee whole] Or *saved thee*, in soul, as well as body; that is, Christ, the object of faith, had saved him; for his salvation is ascribed to his faith, not as the efficient cause of it, but as that was wrought in him, and drawn forth from him, and exercised by him, in receiving this blessing from Christ, the author of it, even both corporal and spiritual salvation.

20 ¶ And when he was demanded of the Pharisees; when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

Or was *asked* by them; who expected the Messiah, and that when he was come he would set up a temporal kingdom, and deliver them from the Roman yoke; when they should enjoy great liberty, peace, and prosperity; so that they might put the following question to Christ in a serious manner, agreeable to these expectations: or it may be occasioned by the frequent mention that had been made of *the kingdom of God* by John, and Christ, and his disciples, in their ministry; and so be put in a way of derision; or, as most of their questions were, with a view to ensnare or puzzle:

When the kingdom of God should come] Either the kingdom that God had promised, or the kingdom of the Messiah, who is truly God, that had been so often spoken of by John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles. The Ethiopic version reads, "the kingdom of heaven," which is the same with *the kingdom of God*; for these phrases are promiscuously used. This question they need not have asked, had they carefully attended to the writings of the Old-Testament they had in their hands; and had

(*m*) T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 15. 2. & 21. 2.

(*n*) T. Hieros. Shekalim, fol. 46. 2.

(*o*) Maimon. in Misn. Beracot, c. 8. §. 3. & Bartenora in ilid. c. 7. §. 1.

(*p*) Misn. Negaim, c. 3. §. 1. Maimon, Tumaot Tzaracot, c. 9. §. 1.

had they diligently observed the signs of the times, in which they lived; and had they seriously regarded the ministry and miracles of Christ among them; from these things, they might have concluded, not only that the time was at hand, when the kingdom of God should be set up, but that it was already come: they might have observed, that not only the harbinger of the Messiah was come, who was John the Baptist; but that the Messiah himself was among them, by the many wonderful things which he wrought among them, and by the many scripture-prophecies which were fulfilled in him; they might have seen that the sceptre was manifestly departing from Judah; that all power and authority were falling into the hands of the Romans; and that only a mere shadow and appearance of it was among them: they might have known, by calculation, that the time fixed in Daniel's prophecy for the coming of the Messiah was now up, and therefore he must be come; and they had very good reason to believe that Jesus was he.

He answered them, and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation] Or so as to be observed by the eye, or to be distinguished when it comes as the kingdoms of this world, by outward pomp and splendor, by temporal riches, external honours, and worldly power and grandeur; though it so far came with observation, that had they had eyes to see, they might have observed that it was come, by what they saw done by Christ, particularly the power that he showed in the disposing devils out of the bodies of men; see *Matt. xii. 28.* The Syriac version reads, "with observations;" and some understand the words of the observances of the ceremonies of the law, of days, months, and years, and the difference of meats, and the like, which the kingdom of God is not in, and which were to cease upon its coming; but the former sense is best.

21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

Or "shall it be said by any," making their observations, and pointing to this, or that place:

Lo here, or lo there] In this, or that place, country or city, the kingdom of God is set up; the throne of the Messiah is there; and there are the *regalia*, or ensigns of his regal power; no such thing will fall under the observations of man: not but that this would be said, and was said by some persons, as it is suggested it should, *ŷ. 23.* and it appears from *Matt. xxiv. 26.* that some would say he was in such a wilderness, and others, that he was in some private retirement in a house, or

that he was in such a town, or city; as, particularly it was said in Adrian's time, that he was in a place called Bither, where Bar Cochab set up himself for the Messiah: but the sense of the words is, that no such thing ought to be said; and if it was said, it would not be true; nor should it be credited: and the Cambridge copy of Beza's adds, *believe not*, as in *Matt. xxiv. 26.*

For behold, the kingdom of God is within you] In the elect of God among the Jews, in their hearts; it being of a spiritual nature, and lying in *righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*; in the dispossession of Satan, the strong man armed; in the putting down of the old man, sin, with its deceitful lusts, from the throne; and in setting up a principle of grace, as a governing one; and so escapes the observation of natural men, and cannot be pointed at as here, or there. Hence it appears, that the work of grace is an internal thing; it is wrought in the hearts of men; it has its seat in the inward parts, and is therefore called the *inner*, and the *hidden* man: it does not lie in the words, in an outward profession of religion; it is oil in the vessel of the heart, and is distinct from the lamp of a visible profession: it does not lie in external works and duties, but it is an inward principle of holiness in the soul, or spirit of man, produced there by the Spirit of God, and is therefore called by his name, *John iii. 6.* and it also appears to be a very glorious thing, since it is signified by a kingdom: it is a rich treasure; it is gold tried in the fire, which makes rich; it is an estate, that good part and portion which can never be taken away; it is preferable to the greatest portion on earth men can enjoy; even the largest and richest kingdom in the world is not to be compared with it; it is a kingdom which cannot be moved; and as it is glorious in itself, it makes such glorious who are partakers of it: *The king's daughter is all glorious within*, Psalm *xlv. 13.* and it is high in the esteem of God; it is the *hidden man of the heart*, but it is in his sight; it is in his view, and is in his sight of great price: it is likewise evident from hence, that it has great power and authority in the soul; it has the government in it; it reigns, through righteousness, unto eternal life; and by it, Christ, as king of saints, dwells and reigns in his people. Now this is not to be understood of the scribes and Pharisees, as if they had any such internal principle in them, who were as painted sepulchres, and had nothing but rottenness and corruption in them: but the sense is, that there were some of the people of the Jews, of whom the Pharisees were a part, who had been powerfully wrought upon under the ministry of John, Christ, and his apostles; and were so many

H h

instances

instances of efficacious grace, and of the kingdom of God, and of his Gospel coming with power to them. Though the words may be rendered, *The kingdom of God is among you*; and the meaning be, that the king Messiah was already come, and was among them, and his kingdom was already set up, of which the miracles of Christ were a full proof; and if they could not discern these signs of the times, and evident appearances of the kingdom of God among them, they would never be able to make any observation of it hereafter, or elsewhere.

22 And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.

His disciples, who also were expecting a worldly kingdom, and external honours, and temporal emoluments, and riches; and therefore to take off their minds from these things, and that they might not have their expectations raised this way, but, on the other hand, look for afflictions and persecutions, he observes to them,

The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man] ימור המשיח "the days of the Messiah," a phrase frequently used in Jewish writings; that is, when they should be glad to enjoy one such a day in the personal presence of Christ, as they now did; and instead of looking forward for happy days, in a temporal sense, they would look back upon the days they have enjoyed with Christ, when he was in person among them, and wish they had one of those days again; when, besides his corporal presence, and spiritual communion with him, and the advantage of his ministry and miracles, they had much outward peace and comfort: whereas in those days nothing but afflictions and persecutions abode them, wherever they went; so that by these words Christ would have them to understand, that they were not to expect better times, but worse; and that they would be glad of one of the days they now had, and in vain wish for it:

And ye shall not see it] Or enjoy it. Moreover, days and opportunities of public worship, of praying to the Lord, of singing his praise, of hearing his word, and of attending on his ordinances, may be called *days of the Son of man*, or Lord's days; see *Rev. i. 10.* even the first days of weeks, on which days the apostles and primitive churches met together for religious worship: and these may very well be called days of the Son of man, since, on those days he first appeared to his disciples, after his resurrection, *John xx. 19, 26.* and on the same days his disciples and followers met together to preach in his name, to hear his Gospel, and to commemorate his sufferings and death, *Acts xx. 7.*

1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. and still continue to do so; and seeing he often meets with his people at such seasons and opportunities, fills them with his Spirit, communicates his grace, and indulges them in fellowship with himself, which make those days desirable ones: but sometimes so violent has been the persecution of the saints, that they have not been able, for a long time, to enjoy one of those days openly and with freedom, though greatly desired by them; which may be considered as a fulfilment, at least in part, of this prediction of our Lord's: and therefore, whenever this is the case, it should not be thought strange; it is no other than what Christ has foretold should be: and it may teach us to prize, make use of, and improve such days and opportunities, whilst we have them; we know not how soon our teachers may be removed into corners, when we shall wish in vain for them, and seasons of hearing them, as is here suggested: sad it is to know the worth of Gospel-opportunities by the want of them!

23 And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them.

That is, "see here, or see there is Christ;" and in two of Beza's Exemplars, the word Christ is added, as in *Matt. xxiv. 23.* from whence it seems to be transcribed: and the sense is, it shall be said by one to another, Christ is in such a place, or he is in such a place; and he will quickly appear, and deliver the people of the Jews out of all their distresses and calamities by the Romans.

Go not after them, nor follow them] The last clause, *nor follow them*, is left out in the Syriac and Persian versions; the meaning is, give no credit to them; as if Christ was come again in person, and was in such a place; do not go along with them where they direct, as into the desert, or into the secret chambers; for to follow them will be very dangerous, of bad consequence, as well as vain and fruitless; see *Acts v. 36, 37.*

24 For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.

The Syriac version reads, "out of heaven," and the Arabic version, "in heaven;" which is the seat of lightning, and from whence it arises:

And shineth unto the other part under heaven] Enlightens the earth, which is under the heaven: though the sense of the words, as they lie in the original text, seems to be, that as the lightning lightens at one end of the heavens, and shines to the other; which is done at once, in a moment, in a twinkling of the eye, and to which agrees the Ethiopic version;

So shall also the Son of man be in his day] Which is not to be understood of the swift progress of the Gospel, after his resurrection and ascension, and the pouring forth of his Spirit; but of his sudden coming, first to take vengeance on the Jewish nation for their rejection of him; and then, at the last day, to judge both quick and dead. By *his day*, is meant his kingdom and glory, or his appearance with power and great glory: Thus we read (q) of Solomon, בְּשָׁעוֹ "in his hour," that is, in his glory, in the time of his kingdom, when he was in his greatest magnificence.

25 But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.

He must suffer, by cruel mockings, spitting, buffeting, scourging, and, at last, death itself; all which must be, and were before his day came, or he entered into his glory, or came in it:

And be rejected of this generation] As the Messiah, and be treated with the utmost scorn and contempt, and in the most base and ignominious manner; being put to the death of the cross, and hanged upon the accursed tree: all which were necessary, and must be; on account of the purposes and decrees of God, the covenant-engagements of Christ; the predictions of the prophets of the Old-Testament, and his own; and the salvation of his people.

26 And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

Whilst Noah was building the ark, and before he went into it; for this respects the days of Noah before the flood, and not after it; for he lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years, Gen. ix. 28.

So shall it be also in the days of the Son of man] Some time before, and at his coming in power and great glory, to destroy the Jews, their nation, city, and temple; and as then, so it will be when he shall come in person, at the last day, to destroy the world. The times of Noah's flood (r), of Jerusalem's destruction, and of the end of the world, bear a great resemblance to each other: and when the Son of man comes in either of these senses, then will the kingdom of God come; or then will it appear that the Messiah is come, and has took to himself his great power, and reigns.

27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

That is, the inhabitants of the old world eat and drank, not merely in a common way, with moderation, and for the support and comfort of

life, which is not blameworthy, nor inconsistent with religious exercises; but they lived in an extravagant and luxurious manner; they indulged their sensual appetites, and put away the evil day far from them, that Noah told them of:

They married wives, they were given in marriage] Not as should have been done, by professors of religion among themselves; but the Sons of God, or professors of the true religion, the posterity of Seth, took them wives of the daughters of men, of the wicked, of the seed of Cain; and very likely gave their daughters in marriage to the sons of men; see Gen. vi. 2, 4. and so they went on in a secure manner, notwithstanding all the remonstrances, warnings, and threatenings of God, by his servant:

Until the day that Noe entered into the ark] Which he had built by divine direction, for the saving of himself and family, and the creatures that were with him, from the waters of the flood; and this was in the six hundredth year of his life, in the second month, the month of October, and in the seventeenth day of that month; Gen. vii. 11, 13.

And the flood came and destroyed them all] All the inhabitants of the earth, every living substance, men, cattle, creeping things, and fowls of the heaven; all but Noah, and his wife, and his three sons, and their wives, and the creatures that were with him in the ark: the flood came not of itself, or by chance, or through the influence, or by the concurrence of second causes merely; though these were used, ordered, and directed by the first cause of all things; but it came by the power of God, according to his will; he brought it on the world of the ungodly; see 2 Pet. ii. 5. The mode of expression is Jewish; it is said of Cain, who is supposed by the Jews to have lived till the flood, בָּא מַבּוּל וְשָׁפַח "the flood came and washed him away (s)."

28 Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

When Lot lived in Sodom, and before, and at the time of the destruction of that city with other neighbouring ones:

They did eat, they drank] See the note in the preceding verse, and Ezekiel xvi. 49. This is to be understood of the inhabitants of Sodom and the other cities that perished with it:

They bought, they sold] They traded among themselves, and with their neighbours; and, as it appears

(q) Misna Bava Metzia, c. 7. §. 1. & Jarchi & Bartenora in ibid. Vid. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 15. 4. & 16. 1.

(r) The Targum on Isa. 54. 9. paraphrases the words, "the days of Noah," instead of "the waters of Noah;" and so in T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 99. 1. (s) Bereshit Rabba, § 32. fol. 27. 2. & Shemot Rabba, §. 37. fol. 134. 4.

pears from the text referred to, they had no regard to the poor and needy; they made no conscience of defrauding and oppressing them:

They planted] Vineyards, and fruit-trees; living in a very fruitful soil, like the garden of God, Genesis xiii. 10.

They builded] Houses for themselves and posterity; and thus, as a Jewish writer (*t*) observes of them, in agreement with our Lord's design in all this, being filled with the increase of the earth, they lived in security, peace, and tranquillity.

29 But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all.

Being plucked and brought out from thence by the angels early in the morning; and a fine morning it was; the sun was risen, and shone out upon the earth, as Lot got into Zoar, Genesis xix. 15, 16, 23. The Jews (*u*) say it was the sixteenth day of Nisan:

It rained fire and brimstone from heaven] The Syriac version reads, "the Lord rained;" so it is said in Gen. xix. 24. *the Lord rained from the Lord*; Jehovah the Son, rained from Jehovah the Father; or the Word of the Lord, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem render it; and which is no inconsiderable proof of the Deity of Christ: and the Persic version here reads, *God rained*; and so this amazing shower of fire and brimstone, and which was a violent storm of thunder and lightning, is ascribed to God in 2 Peter ii. 6. see the note there. The Hebrew word, גפרית, used in Genesis xix. 24. though it is rendered in the Targum of Jonathan, גפרית, and by the Septuagint, θύς, both which words signify *sulphur*, or *brimstone*; and which last word is used here, following the Greek version; yet it is observed by some learned men, that it rather signifies *pitch*, or *resin*, which proceeds from some sort of trees; and indeed by its derivation, it seems to signify something belonging to, or that comes out of the wood of Gopher, of which the ark was made, Gen. vi. 14. which some think to be the pine-tree, from whence comes pitch: and this, though it comes from the inside of a tree, may as well be said to be rained from heaven, as brimstone, which is taken out of the bowels of the earth; and the rather, since pitch is sometimes fluid; and especially it being combustible, may be joined with fire, as well as sulphur, or brimstone; though a shower of neither, can be accounted for in an ordinary way, but must be extraordinary and miraculous: the destruction of this city, with others, by fire from heaven, and the lake Asphaltites, being a bituminous and sulphurous

one, into which the tract of land they stood upon was converted, are confirmed by the testimonies of heathen writers; as Tacitus (*x*), Solinus (*y*), Strabo (*z*), Justin (*a*), and Pliny (*b*); as well as by Josephus (*c*), and Philo the Jew (*d*).

And destroyed them all] All the inhabitants of Sodom, and all of Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim; and which was an example of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the land of Judea, Deut. xxix. 23. and of the burning of the world, and of the perdition of the wicked in hell, 2 Pet. ii. 6. Jude 7.

30 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

When Christ is revealed in his power, when he comes to avenge himself on the Jews; and when he is revealed from heaven in flaming fire, at the last day. As in the days of Noah and Lot, men lived in great carnality and security, thoughtless and fearless of danger, so were the Jews before the destruction of their city and temple, buoying themselves up with deliverance to the last; and such will be the times of indolence and supineness, before the coming of the day of the Lord to judgment: and as the destruction of the old world, and men of Sodom, and the adjacent parts, was sudden and unexpected, so was the destruction of Jerusalem, and so will be the burning of the world; that day will come, as a thief in the night: and as in the above calamities, there was a remnant saved, who were taken care of; as Noah and his family in the ark, and as Lot, and his wife and daughters were snatched out of Sodom, when the rest were destroyed; so when the christians removed from Jerusalem, and went to Pella, being directed by a divine oracle, then came on the siege of Jerusalem (*e*); and when all the elect will be gathered in, and brought to faith and repentance, then shall the earth, and the works in it be burnt up: and as these judgments were universal, so was that upon the people of the Jews; and such will be the general desolation in the last day.

31 In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

Shall be there either for diversion or devotion, when he shall hear that the Roman armies are approaching to Jerusalem, to besiege it:

And

(x) Hist. l. 5.
graph. l. 16.

(y) Polyhistor. c. 48.
(a) Hist. l. 36. c. 3.

(z) Geograph. l. 16.
(b) Nat.

Hist. l. 5. c. 16.

(c) Antiqu. l. 1. c. 11. §. 4. & 30

Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 21.

(d) De Vita Mosis, l. 2. p. 662.

(e) Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. 5.

(t) Pinke Eliczer, c. 25. (u) Bereshit Rabba, §. 50. fol. 45. 3.

And his stuff in the house] Or his vessels, his goods and furniture; or his utensils, and instruments of trade and business:

Let him not come down] The inner way of the house, from the top:

To take it away] With him in his flight, but let him descend by the steps, or ladder on the outside of the house, and make his escape directly to Pella, or the mountains:

And he that is in the field] At work, and has laid down his clothes in some certain part of the field, or at home:

Let him likewise not return back] To fetch them, but make the best of his way as he is; see the notes on Matt. xxiv. 17, 18.

32 Remember Lot's wife.

Her name is by the Jews said to be *Adith*, as some (*f*); or *Irith*, as others (*g*): and who, they also say, was a native of Sodom; and that the reason of her looking, was either to see what would be the end of her father's house and family (*h*); or as others (*i*), because her heart yerned after her daughters, and she looked back to see if they followed her; upon which *she became a pillar of salt*, Gen. xix. 26. They say (*k*), that her bones were burnt with the brimstone, and along with which was salt, into which she was turned, according to Deut. xxix. 23. They often speak of, סומית מלח "salt of Sodom (*l*);" where the gloss says, it is thick and hard, as a stone; and to which they sometimes (*m*) ascribe this virtue, that it blinds the eyes: and there is a sort of salt, which they call (*n*) Galilean salt, of like hardness; and Pliny speaks (*o*) of salt in the Indies, which they cut out, as stones out of quarries: and that at *Carrhis*, a town in Arabia, is salt with which they build houses and walls: of a very durable nature it is certain, was this pillar of salt, Lot's wife became; for Josephus reports (*p*), that he saw this pillar of salt in his time; and Irenæus asserts (*q*), that it was in being when he lived; and modern writers, as Burchardus and Adrichomius, speak of it as still existing; and the Jerusalem paraphrast on Genesis xix. 26. says, it shall endure till the time the resurrection comes, in which the dead shall live. The reason of her becoming a pillar of salt, the Jews say, is, that she sinned by salt, and so was punished by salt; and which is differently related, and in a very fanciful way: one writer (*r*) reports,

that "When the angels came, Lot said to her, 'Give me a little salt for these travellers; she replied to him, Truly this is a bad custom, which thou bringest to be used in this place;' and elsewhere (*s*) it is said, that "Upon their coming, she went to all her neighbours, and said unto them, Give me some salt, for we have travellers; but her intention was, that the men of the city might know them." But leaving those things, our Lord's design in these words, is to instruct his followers by this instance, not to look back in their flight, or to turn back to their houses to save their goods, when the desolation of Jerusalem was coming on, lest they should suffer in it; and to warn all professors of religion, in all ages, against looking back to things that are behind, or turning their backs on him, in a time of distress and persecution; since such are not fit for the kingdom of God; and in these God has no delight and pleasure.

33 Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

Seek to save it by fleeing to some stronghold, or by continuing in the metropolis, and strongest city in the nation, Jerusalem:

Shall lose it] There he will be in the greatest danger:

And whosoever shall lose his life] Or expose it to danger, by fleeing to the mountains, or going to Pella, a small town beyond Jordan, of no strength, and where there might be thought no security,

Shall preserve it] He shall be safe; see the note on Matt. xvi. 25.

34 I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

That night of affliction and calamity, that shall be upon the Jewish nation, and which is before called *that day*, y. 36. and therefore is not to be understood literally of the night:

There shall be two men in one bed] This is said agreeable to the time, the night before-mentioned, that being the time to be in bed, at rest and asleep; for they that sleep, sleep in the night; and still suggests the security the people of the Jews would be in at the time of their destruction. The word *men* is not in the text, it is only, *there shall be two in one bed*; and may as well be understood of a man and his wife, since it is not so usual for two men to lie in one bed; and this the rather more strongly expresses the distinguishing providence of God in saving

(f) Pirke Eliezer, c. 25. (g) Baal Hatturim in Gen. xix. 26. (h) Targum Jon. & Hieros. in ibid.

(i) Pirke Eliezer, ibid. (k) Aben Ezra in Gen. xix. 26.

(l) T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 20. 2. & Menachot, fol. 23. 1.

(m) Bartenora in Misna Erubin, c. 1. §. 10. (n) T. Bab.

Kiddushin, fol. 62. 1. (o) Nat. Hist. l. 31. c. 7.

(p) Antiqu. l. 7. c. 12. (q) Adv. Hæres. l. 4. c. 51.

(r) Jarchi in Gen. xix. 26.

(s) Bereshit Rabba, §. 53. fol. 46. 1.

saving the one, and suffering the other to be taken and lost: the words may be rendered, "there shall be two upon one couch;" that is, sitting together at supper, which was also in the night season: it was the custom of the ancients, to sit upon beds, or couches, at meals; and they had a bed, or couch, which held two persons only, and was called *biclinium* (*l*): and so likewise this imitates, that the destruction of the Jews, would be at a time when they were thoughtless of it, and were eating and drinking, as in the days of Noah and of Lot, *y*. 27, 28.

The one shall be taken] By the Roman soldiers:

And the other shall be left] Being by one providence or another preserved; which is mentioned, to shew the distinction God will make in his providence, and to encourage believers to trust in it.

35 Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

In *Matt.* xxiv. 41. it is added, "in the mill;" in the house where the mill was, and at one and the same mill; and so the Ethiopic version here, "two shall grind in one mill:" and it was common for two women to grind at one hand-mill; and though the word women is not in the text, it is rightly put into the translation; since the word used is of the feminine gender, and since grinding was the business of women; and so the *Perfic* version here supplies it, as we do; see the note on *Matthew* xxiv. 41.

The one shall be taken, and the other left] The Roman soldiers entering the mill, will lay hold on the one, and carry her away with them, and leave the other; and for which no other reason can be given, but the sovereign will and providence of God, which should overrule and dispose the minds of these men to act in such a manner.

36 Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

At work in the field, tilling the ground, or sowing the seed in it, or reaping the corn; which of themsoever was the work of the field, at the time of Jerusalem's destruction:

The one shall be taken, and the other left] The circumstances attending these several instances shew, that they cannot be considered as expressive of the use and effect of the preaching of the Gospel, that being the favour of life unto life to some, and the favour of death unto death to others; some being effectually called by it, and others being left to die in their sins; since these men and women are said to be either in a bed asleep, or on a couch feasting, or grinding in a mill, or at work in the

field, and so not in proper places, and at leisure to hear the Gospel preached. The whole verse is left out in the Ethiopic version, and in some Greek copies; though it is in the Syriac, Arabic, and *Perfic* versions, and in the Complutensian edition, and in some ancient copies, as Beza observes.

37 And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

That is, either the Pharisees put this question to Christ, who demanded of him when the kingdom of God would come, *y*. 20. or rather the disciples, to whom Christ more especially directed his discourse, *y*. 22. who hearing of the distinction that would be made of persons in these dismal times, ask where it should be; not where the persons would be left, but whither the others would be taken, and by whom:

And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is] The carcass of the Jewish nation, as at Jerusalem chiefly, and in whatsoever place:

Thither will the eagles be gathered together] The Roman army, whose ensign was the eagle; these will come, seize upon them, and take them and devour them, as they did: the *Perfic* version renders it, *vultures*; see the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 28. These words can by no means be understood of sinners fleeing to Christ for eternal life and salvation; nor of the gathering of saints to him, at the last day; for how fitly soever such persons may be compared to eagles, the word *body*, or *carcass*, as in *Matt.* xxiv. 28. and which is so read in some copies here, is not so suitable to Christ; and especially at his glorious appearing; and besides, the words are an answer to a question, where such persons would be, who would be taken and destroyed, when others would be left, or preserved: and manifestly refer to the body, or carcass of the Jewish people at Jerusalem, and other fortified places; where they should think themselves safe, but should not be so, the Roman armies gathering about them, and seizing them as their prey: it is yet a more strange interpretation, which is proposed by a very learned man (*u*); that by the eagle is meant, Christ; and by the *body*, or *carcass*, the church in the times of antichrist; and by *gathering* to it, the coming of Christ: for though Christ may be said to bear and carry his people, as the eagle bears and carries its young upon its wings, which he observes from *Exod.* xix. 4. *Deut.* xxxii. 11. *Isaiah* lxiii. 9. yet not a single eagle, but eagles, in the plural number, are here mentioned; which shews,

(*l*) Vid. Alstorph, de *Lectione Veter.* c. 15. p. 90. 91.

(*u*) Teelmannus.

shews, that not a single person, as Christ, but many are here intended, even legions of Roman soldiers: nor can the church of Christ be compared to a dead and filthy carcass, in the worst of times, even in the times of antichrist; for however forlorn, distressed, and afflicted her condition is, she is kept alive, and in some measure pure from antichristian pollutions; and is represented by a woman, to whom two wings of a great eagle are given (wherefore she should rather be designed by the eagles) to fly with into the wilderness, where she is preserved and *nourished for a time, and times, and half a time*, Rev. xii. 14. Nor is Christ's coming ever expressed by the gathering of him to his people; but on the other hand, they are always said to be gathered unto him; see 2 *Thess.* ii. 1.

CHAP. XVIII.

In this chapter we have Christ exhorting to constant and fervent prayer, by the similitude of an importunate widow, v. 1—8. By the similitude of a Pharisee and publican he teacheth humility, and humiliation for sin in prayer, v. 9—14. Little children brought to Christ, v. 15—17. He teacheth the ruler what he must do to inherit eternal life, v. 18—23. And that the rich are scarcely saved, v. 24—27. Promiseth great recompence to those that forsake all and follow him, v. 28—30. Foretelleth his sufferings and resurrection, v. 31—34. and near Jericho openeth the eyes of a blind man, v. 35—35.

I AND he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

He spake to his own disciples, as the Ethiopic version reads, in order to encourage them to prayer, with perseverance in it; since such sore times of trial and affliction were coming upon the Jews, of which he had spoken in the preceding chapter; and such times more especially call for prayer; see *Psalms* l. 15. *to this end*,

That men ought always to pray] This is opposed to them who pray not at all, or have left off prayer before God, or who pray only in distress; and suggests, that a man should pray as often as he has an opportunity; should be constant and assiduous at the throne of grace, and continue putting up his requests to God, though he does not presently return an answer:

And not to faint] By reason of afflictions, temptations, desertions, and delays in answering prayer; and prayer itself is an admirable antidote against fainting under afflictive providences: it is with the Jews an affirmative precept, that a man should

pray, *בכל יום* “every day (a);” it was usual with them to pray three times a day; see *Psalms* lv. 17. *Dan.* vi. 10. There is no set time fixed by Christ; men should be always praying. This is not to be understood, that a man should be always actually engaged in the work of prayer; that he should be continually either in his closet, in private devotion to God, or attending exercises of more public prayer, with the faints; for there are other religious exercises to be performed, besides prayer; and besides, there are many civil affairs of life, it is every man's indispensable duty to regard: nor does our Lord mean in the least to break in upon, or interrupt the natural and civil duties of life; but his meaning is, that a man should persevere in prayer, and not leave off, or be dejected, because he has not an immediate answer; and this is clear from the following case.

2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

There was in every city in the land of Israel a sanhedrim, or court of judicature; in Jerusalem was the great sanhedrim, consisting of seventy-one; and in every city where there were an hundred and twenty men, or more, there was a lesser sanhedrim, consisting of twenty-three; and in a city in which there were not an hundred and twenty men, were three judges; for there was no sanhedrim, or court of judicature, that consisted of less than three (b): but “Although there is no judicature less than three, *מותר לאחד לרין*” it is lawful for one to judge,” according to the law, “as it said, *Levit.* xix. 15. *In righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour*; but according to the words of the scribes (only,) when there are three, and two that judge, their judgment is no judgment: one who is publicly approved or authorized, or who has taken a licence from the sanhedrim, it is lawful for him to judge alone, but “it is not accounted a judicature; and though it is lawful, it is the command of the wise men, that he set others with him; for lo, they say, “Do not judge alone, for there is none that judgeth alone, but one (c).” It may be, this judge was, *מומחה* “an authorized and approved one;” however, we have instances of single judges, or of persons that have judged alone, at least by the consent of parties. “For the tradition is, of things in which they do not take upon them; but if they take upon them, (or agree to be judged) one may judge, though alone (d).” And again, “elsewhere (e);” “If he is publicly authorized or approved,

(a) Maimon. *Hilchot Tephilla*, c. 1. §. 1.

Hilchot Sanhedrim, c. 1. §. 3. 4.

(d) T. Hieros. *Sanhedrim*, fol. 18. 1.

(e) T. Bab. *Sanhedrim*, fol. 5. 1.

(b) Maimon. *Ibid.* c. 2. §. 10. 11.

"approved, he judges, though alone." The qualifications of one to be a judge, even of the bench of three, were these (*f*); "Wisdom, meekness, (or modesty,) and fear, (that is, of God,) and hatred of mammon, (or money,) love of truth, and to have the love of men, and to be masters of a good name, (or to be of good report.)" But the judge in the text, came greatly short of these qualifications: his character follows,

Which feared not God, neither regarded men] And therefore, according to the above canon, was disqualified from being a judge, since he was destitute of the fear of God; and seeing he regarded not men, he could neither have any love to men, nor any share in the affections of men; and such an one is very unfit to be a judge, for he cannot be thought to have any regard to his conscience, or his credit, and so not to justice and equity. The former of these characters, is what belongs to every man in a state of unregeneracy; there is no true fear of God before the eyes, or in the heart of any unconverted man; wherever it is, it is put there by the grace of God: this is one of the first things which appears in conversion, and shews itself in an hatred of sin, and in the performance of duties; and is increased by the discoveries of the grace and goodness of God; but the want of this is more visible in some than in others: some, though they have not the grace of fear, yet are under some awe of the divine being, and pay a regard to the word of God; and what, through the force of education, and the dictates of a natural conscience, dare not go such lengths in sin, as others do: but there are others, who even say there is no God, and at least live as if there was none; they endeavour to work themselves, and others, into a disbelief of the being of God; and set their mouths against heaven, deny his providence, and despise his word; stretch out their hands, and strengthen themselves against the Almighty; and in a fearless manner, *run upon the thick bosses of his bucklers*; they declare their sin as Sodom, and hide it not, yea, glory in it; they promise themselves impunity, and laugh at a future judgment; and of such a cast was this judge, and therefore a very improper person for such an office: for civil magistrates, and rulers of every sort, ought to be just, ruling in the fear of God: and as for the other part of his character, it is not to be wondered at; for such that fear not God, will have little regard to men; no otherwise, or further, than they are obliged to it: indeed, judges ought not to regard men in judgment; that is, to respect the persons of men, and through affection, or flattery, or bribes, wrest judgment: but this is not the sense of the phrase here, since this agrees not with the other part of the character, and since

(*f*) Maimonides Hilchot Sanhedrim, c. 2. §. 7.

he is called an *unjust* judge; but the meaning is, that he had no regard to the laws of men, any more than the laws of God; but made his own will the rule of his actions, and had no regard to doing justice between man and man; nor did he care what any man said of him; he had no concern about his reputation and character, having none to lose.

3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

A widow, poor and helpless, and none among men to counsel, direct, and assist her, and take her part: now as in the accommodation of this parable, the elect of God answer to this widow; such an one is rather pitched upon to represent the helpless, desolate, and forlorn condition they are in among men in this world, though they are espoused to one husband, Christ; and especially to signify the state and condition of God's elect among the Jews in those sad times, before the destruction of Jerusalem, which this parable has respect unto. Christ is the bridegroom of his church and people; he is their husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and they are espoused as a chaste virgin to him; and whilst he was here on earth, his disciples, who were the children of the bridegroom, could not fast and mourn, for which they had no reason; but upon the death of Christ, when he was removed from them, they had great sorrow of heart; they were left like widows and orphans: hence those words of Christ, *John* xiv. 18. and were persecuted by the Jews in their own land; and wherever they went, they stirred up the Gentiles against them; and so things continued till near the destruction of Jerusalem; during which time many a request was made to God, the judge of the widows and fatherless, to the following purport:

And she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary] Or do me justice in the cause depending between me, and him that has wronged me; hear the cause, and do right; vindicate, and deliver me. Many are the adversaries of God's people, as the sins and corruptions of their own hearts, Satan and his angels, wicked oppressors, and persecutors; the last seem, in the mystical sense, to be designed here: it is lawful to pray for vengeance on them; it is right to apply to God, and leave it with him, to whom it belongs; and it has been the suit and cry of the best of men; see *Rev.* vi. 9, 10. It does not become the people of God to avenge themselves, even when it is in the power of their hands; nor should they desire it for their own sakes, so much as for the glory of God; they should ask it, not to gratify a revengeful spirit in them, but for the honour of divine justice;

justice; and this should be always with submission to the will of God; leaving it to his own time and way, to whom vengeance belongs, and who has said it is mine, and I will repay it; as he certainly will sooner or later: the purity of his nature, his abhorrence of sin, and sinful men, and his love to his own people, engage him to it.

4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

For a while he would give no ear to her cries, nor take her cause in hand, nor right her wrongs, and clear her of her adversary:

But afterward he said within himself] As he was considering the matter in his own mind, and reflecting on this woman's case, and the frequent application she had made to him:

Though I fear not God, nor regard man] A monster in iniquity he was, to say so of himself; for though the character belongs to many, there are few that are so impudent in sin as to take it to themselves and glory in it.

5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

She troubled him by often knocking at his door, by loud cries and earnest intreaties, with strong arguments, and floods of tears, and could not easily be removed from his presence, or got out of his house:

I will avenge her] I will hear her cause, do her justice, and deliver her from her troublesome adversary:

Lest by her continual coming she weary me] So that it was not from a conscience of duty in him, as a judge, or from commiseration of the poor widow's case; but from a selfish end, for his own ease, in perfect agreement to his character, that his house might not be disturbed, and his ears stunned with her noise and cry, and he be pestered with her company day after day. The character of this judge, his reasoning with himself upon it, his principles from which he acted, and the ends he had in view, are wholly to be left out in the accommodation of this parable; and no further to be considered than as the argument from the lesser to the greater may be strengthened by them; the intention of the parable being only to shew the force, efficacy, and usefulness of importunity in prayer, as appears by the application of it by our Lord, in the verses following.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

VOL. II.

The Lord Jesus Christ, who delivered out this parable to his disciples: said,

Hear what the unjust judge saith] And take encouragement from hence to be frequent and importunate in prayer with God; for if such a cruel, merciless, and unjust judge is to be wrought upon by importunity to do justice, who has no principle to influence him, how much more will not God, who is a just judge, the judge of widows and of the oppressed, a God of great mercy and compassion, who delights in the prayers of his people, knows their cases, and is able to help them, and who has an interest in them, and they in him? How much more will not he regard their importunate requests, and arise, and save them? Much such like reasoning as this is used by the Jews: "Says R. Simeon ben Celphetha, An impudent man overcomes a good man, or a modest man, (by his importunity,) how much more the goodness of the world itself (g)?" That is, how much more will a man, by his continual prayer, prevail with God, who is goodness itself? And they have another saying (h), that agrees with this: "Says R. Nachman, Impudence (that is, importunity) even against God is profitable." The application of this parable follows:

7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

His own elect, who are a select number, a special people, whom he has loved with an everlasting love, so as of his own sovereign good will and pleasure to choose in his Son Jesus Christ unto everlasting life and salvation, through certain ways and means of his own appointing; hence they are peculiarly his: and these he will avenge and vindicate, right their wrongs, do them justice, and deliver them from their adversaries, and take vengeance on them; as may be concluded from his hatred of sin, his justice, and his holiness, from his promises, and from his power, and from the efficacy of prayer, and the regard he has to it: for it follows,

Which cry day and night unto him] Whose prayers he always hears; whose tears he puts up in his bottle; and whose importunity must surely be thought to have more regard with him, than that of the poor widow with the unjust judge:

Though he bear long with them?] Either with their adversaries, their oppressors, and persecutors; who are vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction, whom he endures with much long-suffering, till the

(g) T. Hieros. Taaniet, fol. 65. 2.

(h) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 105. 1.

the sufferings of his people are accomplished, and the iniquities of these men are full; or rather with the elect, for the words may be rendered, "and is long-suffering towards them;" delays his coming, and the execution of his vengeance, as on the Jewish nation, so upon the whole world of the ungodly, till his elect are gathered in from among them; see 2 *Peter* iii. 9.

8 I tell you, that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

He will avenge, &c.] As he did in a few years after the death of Christ, when God's elect among the Jews were singled out, and gathered in from them, and were delivered from their persecutors, and saved from temporal ruin and destruction, whilst the Roman army made sad havock of their enemies; and so will he do in the end of the world.

Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh] Either to destroy Jerusalem, or to judge the world:

Shall he find faith on the earth?] Either in the land of Judea, the believers being removed from thence, and scattered among the Gentiles, and not a man, at least in Jerusalem, that had any faith in Jesus, as the Messiah; or in the world, at the last day: there will then be little of the doctrine of faith, and less of the grace of faith, and still less of the exercise of faith, particularly in prayer, and especially about the coming of Christ; it will be little thought of, and expected, or faith little exercised about it. With this agree some expressions in the Jewish writings (1): "Says R. Jose, The holy, blessed God, will not be revealed to Israel; but in the time, *אשר יבא משיח*," that "faith is not found among them." And elsewhere (2), speaking of the times of the Messiah, and of a star that shall then appear, it is said, "When that star shall be seen in the world, at that time mighty wars shall be stirred up in the world, on all the four sides, *ימרחו כל יבשה*," "and faith will not be found among them." They seem to regard the first coming of the Messiah; and which was true with respect to the majority of their nation; and the same holds good with regard to his second coming; see 2 *Esdra*s v. 1.

9 ¶ And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

Or he spake it with respect to certain men; having a view to them, in order to expose their pride, vanity, arrogance, and self-confidence:

Which trusted in themselves that they were righteous] Or, as if they were righteous; or because they

were so, in their own eyes, and in the esteem of others: the ground of their trust and confidence were themselves, their hearts, and the supposed goodness of them; their outward holiness, their moral behaviour, their duties and good works, their alms-deeds and religious exercises, their ceremonial observances, and fleshly privileges; on account of which they thought themselves very righteous persons, such as could not fail of being accepted with God, and justified in his sight: whereas there are none righteous in and of themselves, no, not one. All the descendents of Adam, as such, are sinners, destitute of a righteousness, and filled with all unrighteousness, and are enemies to true righteousness: no man is naturally righteous, nor is he capable of making himself so, by any thing he can do: none are righteous by their obedience to the law of works, for that is imperfect, and cannot justify before God, in whose sight no flesh living can be justified on this account, however righteous they may appear before men, or may be in their own eyes; for this is contrary to God's way of making men righteous, and would disannul the death of Christ, and encourage boasting in men. Such trust and confidence must be very vain, and arise from ignorance; from ignorance of God, of the perfection of his justice, and of the nature of his righteous law; and of themselves, of the impurity of their hearts, and the imperfection of their obedience. These were of the pharisaical sort, and of which complexion were the generality of the Jews; and many of these were now standing by Christ, and within the hearing of this parable, and for whose sake it was delivered:

And despised others] Or, "every man," as the Syriac and Persic versions read; all the rest of mankind, all but themselves; they made nothing of them, had them in no account; treated them as persons unworthy of the regard of God, and not fit to stand near them, or to be named with them.

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

Into the temple, &c.] Which is called an house of prayer, *Isaiah* lv. 7. The Jews had a mighty notion of praying in a place of religious worship, as in the temple, or in a synagogue; imagining that their prayers were more acceptable to God, and sooner heard by him in such a place than in private: "The prayers of the congregation, they say (1), are heard always; and though there are sinners among them, the holy, blessed God, does

(1) Zohar in Gen. fol. 113. r.

(2) Ibid. in Num. fol. 86. 2.

(1) Maimonides Hilchot Tephilla, c. 8. §. 1, 3. Piske Harosh Beracot, c. 1. art. 7.

“does not despise the prayer of many; wherefore, “a man ought to join himself with the congregation, and not pray alone, whenever he can “pray with that; and let a man go always, morning and evening, to the synagogue: for there is “no prayer heard at all times but in the synagogue.” And they say (*m*), that “He that “prays (in the synagogue) is as if he offered a “pure offering.” These two men had, doubtless, both of them a notion of the sanctity of the place, and acted according to the prevailing sense of the people. They went up thither, not by consultation, agreement, and appointment; for they were of a different cast from each other; but so it happened. Had they went by consent, there was a rule for them (*n*): “Two men that go to a synagogue to pray, and one has finished his prayer “before his neighbour, if he stays for him, his “reward is double; and if he does not stay for “him, his prayer is not heard.” And they had rules also for the manner of their going to and from the place of prayer: when they went thither, they were to go nimbly, in haste, and even run; but when they came back, they were to go very slowly and gently (*o*). “The commandment, “they say (*p*), is to run to a synagogue; for it is “said, *Hof. vi. 3. We shall know, if we shall follow “on to know the Lord*: but when a man comes “out of the synagogue, let him not take large “steps; but let him walk little by little, or “take short steps.” How far these rules were complied with by these men, is of no great moment to know; who they were, follows:

The one a Pharisee] One of those that trusted in themselves, as righteous, and despised all others, especially publicans and sinners; of these see the note on *Matt. iii. 7*. This was the strictest sect among the Jews; they were men that prayed, and fasted much, and were great sticklers for the ceremonies of the law, and the traditions of the elders, and did all they did to be seen of men:

And the other a publican] A gatherer of the Roman tax, though by nation a Jew; and therefore such were had in great contempt by the Jews in general; nor would they eat and drink and converse with them; see the notes on *Matt. ix. 10, 11*.

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

Standing was a praying posture; see the note on *Matt. vi. 5*. nor is this observed, as if it was some-

thing amiss: but the sense is, either, that he stood in some place of eminence, that he might be seen of others; or he stood in a set, fixed posture, in a very grave and solemn manner, shewing great devotion and seriousness; or he stood with great boldness and confidence:

And prayed thus with himself] The phrase, *with himself*, may be read either with the word *stood*, as it is in the Syriac version; and then the sense is that he stood alone, apart from the publican, at a distance from him, as despising him; and lest he should be polluted by him; see *Isa. lxxv. 4*. or with the word *prayed*, and does not design internal prayer, which was what the Pharisees did not use; for all they did was to be seen, and heard of men: but the meaning is, that he prayed only with respect to himself; he was wholly intent upon himself: his own self, and the commendation of himself, were the subject of his prayer; his whole dependence in it was on himself; and he was only seeking by it his own glory: he had no regard to the people of God, to all the saints, nor did he put up one petition for them; nor had he any respect to Christ, the mediator, through whom access is had to God, and acceptance with him; nor to the Holy Spirit for his assistance; and though he addressed himself to God, yet in praise of himself,

Saying, God, I thank thee] There is no petition in this prayer of his for pardoning grace and mercy; nor for larger measures of grace; nor for strength to perform duties, and to hold on to the end; nor for any favour whatever; nor is there any confession of sin in it. So that it scarce deserves the name of a prayer; for in it is only a thanksgiving; indeed, thanksgiving in prayer is right; and had he been a man that had received the grace of God, it would have been right in him to have given thanks to God for it, by which he was made to differ from others: nor would he have been blameworthy, had he thanked God for the good things which he had received from him, or which by his assistance he had done; but nothing of this kind is said by him: he thanks God, in order to exalt himself, and places his righteousness in his own works, and treats all other men in a censorious and disdainful manner; thanking God, or rather blessing himself, saying,

That I am not as other men are] And yet he was as other men, and no better: he was a sinner in Adam, as other men; and a sinner by nature, as others are; and had the same iniquities and corruptions in his heart, as others; and had no more goodness in him than other men, and as far from true real righteousness. Perhaps he means the Gentiles, whom the Jews looked upon as sinners, and the worst of men; and yet they were in no

(*m*) T. Hierof. Beracot, fol. 2. 4.

(*n*) Piske Hahosh, *ibid.*

(*o*) Piske, *ibid.* & T. Hierof. Beracot, fol. 9. 1.

(*p*) Maimon, *ibid.* §. 21

wife better than the Gentiles, as to their state and condition by nature: it was usual to call the Gentiles, גוים "other men;" which phrase is sometimes explained by "the nations of the world (g);" and sometimes by the Cushites, or Samaritans (r); see the note on Luke v. 29.—He goes on,

[*Extortioners, unjust, adulterers*] And yet all these characters belonged to the men of his sect: the Pharisees were oppressors of the poor, devoured widows houses, and extorted money from them under a pretence of long prayers: they are aptly represented by the unjust steward, in chapter xvi. 1, 8. and they were an unclean, unchaste, and an adulterous generation of men, *Matt. xii. 39. John viii. 8, 9.*

[*Or even as this publican*] Pointing to him at some distance, with great scorn and disdain. This was his prayer, or thanksgiving. "It is a tradition of R. Juda, saying, Three things a man ought to say every day; Blessed be thou, ברוך אתה יהוה, "that thou hast not made me a Gentile;" Blessed art thou, that thou hast not made me an unlearned man, (or one that is vain and foolish, uncivil and uncultivated;) Blessed art thou that thou hast not made me a woman (s)." In their prayer-books (t), these thank(givings stand thus: "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the king of the world, that thou hast made me an Israelite; (in some books it is, as before, that thou hast not made me a Gentile.) Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the king of the world, that thou hast not made me a servant," &c. And very agreeable to these benedictions does the Ethiopic version render the prayer of the Pharisee here; "I thank thee, O Lord, that thou hast not made me as other men."

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

[*I fast, &c.*] Not "on the sabbath," as the words may be literally rendered, and as they are in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; for the sabbath was not a fasting, but a feasting-day with the Jews; for they were obliged to eat three meals, or feasts, on a sabbath-day, one in the morning, another at evening, and another at the time of the meat-offering: even the poorest man in Israel, who was maintained by alms, was obliged to keep these three feasts (u). It was forbidden a man to fast until the sixth hour on a sabbath-day; that is, until noon (x): wherefore, it is a great mistake

in Justin (y), and Suetonius (z), that the sabbath was kept by the Jews as a fast. But the word is rightly rendered *in the week*: the whole seven days, or week, were by the Jews commonly called the sabbath; hence, ארבע בשבוע "the first of the sabbath," and the second of the sabbath, and the third of the sabbath (a); that is, the first, second, and third days of the week. Now the two days in the week on which they fasted, were Monday and Thursday, the second and fifth days; on which days the law of Moses, and the book of Esther were read, by the order of Ezra (b); and fasts for the congregation were appointed on those days (c); and so a private person, or a single man, as in this instance, took upon him, or chose to fast on the same (d): the reason of this is, by some, said to be, because Moses went up to mount Sinai on a Thursday, and came down on a Monday (e). But though these men fasted so often, they took care not to hurt themselves; for they allowed themselves to eat in the night till break of day. It is asked (f), "How long may a man eat and drink, that is, on a fast-day? Until the pillar of the morning ascends (day breaks); these are the words of Rabbi (Judah): R. Eliezer ben Simeon says, Until cock crowing." So that they had not so much reason to boast of these performances: he adds,

[*I give tithes of all that I possess*] Not only of what was titheable by the law of Moses, as the produce of his ground; and by the traditions of the elders, as the herbs in his garden, *Matt. xxiii. 23.* but of every thing he had, which was not required by either of them; upon which he thought himself a very righteous person, and more than a common man. It is asked (g), "Who is a plebeian? The wise men say, Whoever does not tithe his fruit." This man would not be thought to be such an one.

13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God, be merciful to me a sinner.

[*Afar off, &c.*] Not at the outermost porch, or at the door; for "A man might not fix his place at the door of the synagogue, but, פתח "he must go afar off," the space of two doors, and "then pray (h);" it may be in the court of the Gentiles,

(g) Gloss. in T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 121. 2.

(r) Gloss. in T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 52. 2.

(s) T. Hieros. Berachot, fol. 13. 2.

(t) ed. Basil. fol. 2. 3. ed. Amst. fol. 4. 1.

(u) Maimon. Hilch. Sabbat, c. 30. §. 9.

(x) Medanip, fol. 40. 4.

(v) Seder Tephillot,

(w) T. Hieros.

(y) Justin, 1. 1. c. 23.

(z) Suetonius, c. 6.

(a) L. 36. c. 2.

(z) Octav. Aug. c. 76.

(a) Maimon. Hilch. Mechoire Ophara, c. 2. §. 8.

(b) T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 82. 1. Megilla, fol. 31. 1. 2.

(c) Maimon. Hilchot Taanith, c. 1. §. 5.

(d) T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 12. 1.

(e) Godwin Moses & Aaron, l. 1. c. 10.

(f) T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 88. 1.

(g) T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 61. 1.

(h) Piske Harosh Berachot, c. 1. art. 7. Vid. T. Hieros. Berachot, fol. 9. 1.

Gentiles, when the Pharisee was in the court of the Israelites; at least he was *afar off* from him: and indeed, those who came to humble themselves before the Lord, and confess their sins, were obliged to stand at the distance of four cubits one from another, that one might not hear the prayers and confessions of the other (i): and it might be, that this poor man might stand at a greater distance than was required; that he might not displease the Pharisee, who, he knew, would resent it, should he stand near him; or rather, this was done, to testify the sense he had of his state and condition, and of his unworthiness; as that he was *afar off* from God, and unworthy to draw nigh unto him, and deserved to be kept at a distance from him for ever. So it is said (k) of the Israelites, that they trembled at mount Sinai, and stood *afar off*, *למרחק* "to shew their humility;" and under a work of the law, and under such a like dispensation was this publican; and therefore

Would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven] And which, as it was an humble posture he stood in, agrees with the rules the Jews give (l); "The order (or posture) of the body, how is it? When a man stands in prayer he ought to set his feet one by the side of the other, and fix his eyes, *למטה* "below" as if he looked to the earth; and his heart must be open above, as if he stood in the heavens; and lay his hands upon his heart, putting the right hand over the left; and must stand as a servant before his master, with trembling, and fear, and dread, and may not put his hands upon his loins." And agreeable to this, it is elsewhere (m) said, "He that prays, ought to fix his eyes below, and his heart above." And the Jews used to look downward, or shut their eyes, for the sake of attention in prayer; and it was even forbidden them to open their eyes to look upon the wall (n). This shewed in the publican that the guilt of his sins lay heavy on him, that he could not look up; that shame filled him with blushing; that sorrow caused his countenance to fall; and that fear of divine wrath and displeasure possessed him; and that he looked upon himself as unworthy of the smiles of heaven:

But smote upon his breast] Pointing at the fountain of his sin; expressing by this action his sorrow and repentance for it; and an aversion and abhorrence of himself on account of it, joined with indignation and revenge; and he did this to arouse, and stir up all the powers and faculties of his soul,

to call upon God. The Persian version renders it, "he fell on his knees, and beat the earth with his head;" taking a sort of revenge on himself for sin:

Saying, God, be merciful to me a sinner] This is his prayer; a short, but a very full one, and greatly different from that of the Pharisee; in which is a confession that he was a *sinner*; a sinner in Adam, who had derived a sinful nature from him, being conceived and born in sin; and a sinner by practice, having committed many actual transgressions, attended with aggravating circumstances; a guilty and filthy sinner, a notorious one, deserving of the wrath of God, and the lowest hell. He speaks of himself as if he was the only sinner in the world; at least, as if there was none like him; and there is in this prayer also a petition; and the object it is put up to, is God, against whom he had sinned; with whom there is mercy and forgiveness; and who only can forgive sin; and who has promised that he will; and has proclaimed his name, *a God pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin*; and has given instances of his forgiving grace and mercy; and therefore the publican was right in addressing him by confession: the petition he makes to him is, to be *merciful*, or *propitious* to him; that is, to shew mercy to him, through the propitiatory sacrifice of the Messiah, which was typified by the sacrifices under the law: the first thing a sensible sinner wants, is an application of pardoning grace and mercy; and forgiveness springs from mercy; and because the mercy of God is free and abundant, therefore pardon is so: but this is not to be expected from an absolute God, or God out of Christ. God is only propitious in Christ: hence it may be observed, that God pardons none but those to whom he is propitious in his Son; and that he forgives sin upon the foot of a reconciliation, and satisfaction made to his law and justice; and so pardon is an act of justice, as well as of mercy; and that there is no pardoning mercy but through Christ. The Arabic version renders it, "spare me, because I am a sinner;" see *Psalms* xxv. 11.

14. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

The publican that so freely owned himself to be a sinner, and by his carriage acknowledged he was unworthy of any favour; and who was treated with so much contempt by the Pharisee,

Went down to his house] From the temple, which was built on a mountain,

Justified, rather than the other] Accounted as a righteous.

(i) Jarchi & Bartenora in Pirke Abot, c. 5. §. 5.

(k) Tzeror Hammor, fol. 80. 1.

(l) Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 5. §. 4. & Moles Korfehis Mitsvot Torat, pr. 18. m. 19.

(m) T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 105. 2.

(n) Tzeror Hammor, fol. 25. 3.

a righteous person in the sight of God; justified from all his sins, and accepted by him; when the other was abhorred and neglected. The Syriac and Perfic versions, and so Beza's most ancient copy, read, "than the Pharisee," who had such an high opinion of himself, and despised others: not that the Pharisee was justified at all, when the publican really was; but the sense is, that if judgment had been to have been made, and sentence passed according to the then conduct and behaviour of both parties, the publican had greatly the advantage in the sight of God; a humble demeanour being well-pleasing and acceptable to him, when pride and arrogance, boasting of, and trusting in a man's own righteousness, are abhorred by him;

For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted] This was a proverbial expression, often mentioned by Christ on different occasions, and frequently used by the Jews; see the note on *Matt. xxiii. 12.* to which may be added the following passages; "Whoever is of a haughty spirit, at last shall be made low (o)." And again, "Whosoever humbleth himself, the holy blessed God will lift him up (p)." *

15 ¶ And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them.

Infants, &c.] As well as grown persons, that were sick, to be healed by him:

That he would touch them] In order, as some learned men think, to cure them of diseases that attended them; for one of the ways by which Christ healed persons, was by touching them; nor do we read of his touching in common for any other purpose, or of persons desiring him to touch them, or theirs, but for this end: in Matthew it is read, *that he should put his hands on them*; and so the Arabic and Perfic versions here read, "in order to pray over them, and bless them:" but neither in one place, or the other, is any mention of their baptism, or of their being brought for such a purpose; nor can it be concluded from hence:

But when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them] The persons that brought the infants; see the note on *Matthew xix. 13.*

16 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

Called, &c.] Not the disciples, as the Ethiopic version reads, nor the persons that brought the

children, but the children themselves; for the antecedent to the relative *unto them*, can be no other; which shews, that these infants were not newborn babes, or children at the breast, but such as were more grown up, since they were capable of being called to, and of coming to Christ:

And said] That is, "to the disciples;" so the Perfic version expresses it:

Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not] See the note on *Matt. xix. 14.*

For of such is the kingdom of God] Or "of heaven," as the Syriac version reads, and as in *Matt. xix. 14.* that is, the kingdom of God belongs to such, "who are as these; or, like to these," as the Syriac, Arabic and Perfic versions render the words; see the note as before.

17 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein.

Christ takes an occasion from hence to teach his disciples humility, and guard them against pride and vanity:

Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God] The king Messiah, the doctrines of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, even the whole Gospel-dispensation:

As a little child] Without prejudice, pride, ambition, and vanity, with meekness, and humility:

Shall in no wise enter therein] He is a very unfit and improper person to be a professor of the Gospel; or to be admitted to Gospel-ordinances; or to be a member of a Gospel-church; or be reckoned a subject of the Messiah's kingdom, which is of a spiritual nature; and as he has not a meetness for, nor a right unto the kingdom of glory, he shall never see it, and enjoy it.

18 ¶ And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

A young man, *Matt. xix. 20.* a ruler among the Jews, a civil magistrate, and a very rich man; he ran after Jesus, and overtook him in the way, as he was going towards Jericho, *Mark x. 17.*

Saying, Good master] Rabbi, or doctor,

What shall I do to inherit eternal life?] See the note on *Matt. xix. 16.*

19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God.

In answer to his question, beginning with the character he gave him:

Why callest thou me good?] It being unusual to address

(o) T. Bab. Sota, fol. 5. 2.

(p) Zohar in Lev. fol. 39. 1.

addresses men, even their Rabbins, under such a title

None is good, save one] That is, God; or “but God alone,” as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions render it; or, “but the one God,” as read the Syriac, Perfic, and Ethiopic versions; see the note on *Matthew* xix. 17.

20 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.

Thou knowest, &c.] The ten commandments given to Moses, and delivered to the people; and which they were careful to teach their children; though five are only here mentioned, and not in the order in which they stand: suggesting hereby that these must be kept, or the law must be fulfilled, and satisfaction made for the violation of it, or there can be no inheriting eternal life. The five commandments mentioned, are, the seventh, sixth, eighth, ninth, and fifth:

Do not commit adultery; Do not kill; Do not steal; Do not bear false witness; Honour thy father and thy mother] See the notes on *Matthew* xix. 17. and *Mark* x. 19.

21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up,

That is, “the ruler said to him,” as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions add; “to Jesus,” as the Perfic version expresses it;

All these have I kept from my youth up] See the note on *Matt.* xix. 20. where it is added, *What lack I yet?*

22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

Heard that he had kept all these commandments, and that ever since he was a child, and to that very time:

He said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing] Not but that he lacked many other things, and even every thing; for he had performed no one thing as it should be: but Christ said, partly in answer to his pert question, *What lack I yet?* and partly by an ironical concession, granting he had kept them all, as he had said, yet one thing was wanting; and chiefly with a view to mortify his pride and vanity:

Sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me] See the note on *Matt.* xix. 21.

23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

Heard that one thing was wanting, and what that was, which was to part with all his worldly substance, and follow Christ;

He was very sorrowful, for he was very rich] See the note on *Matt.* xix. 22.

24 ¶ And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

He shewed his sorrow by his looks and gestures; and Jesus perceiving that he was determined not to part with his possessions, and follow him:

He said, (to his disciples) How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!] Embrace the Gospel, and submit to the ordinances of it; deny themselves, part with their worldly substance for the cause of Christ, and interest of religion. Riches, which should be a reason for, are often a bar unto a profession of Christ and his Gospel. This is delivered as an affirmation, or by way of assertion, in *Matt.* xix. 23. see the note there.

25 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

These words were spoken to the disciples again, and were a second address to them, after they had shewn astonishment at the former; see the notes on *Matt.* xix. 24. and *Mark* x. 24, 25.

26 And they that heard it, said, Who then can be saved?

These were the disciples of Christ, who so said; see *Matt.* xix. 25.

27 And he said, The things which are impossible with men, are possible with God.

That is, *Jesus*, as the Syriac, Perfic, and Ethiopic versions express it:

The things which are impossible with men, are possible with God] See the note on *Matt.* xix. 26.

28 ¶ Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee.

“To him,” as the Syriac and Arabic versions add; that is, “to the Lord Jesus,” as the Ethiopic version expresses it; who was always the most forward to speak on any occasion: he observing what was required of the young man, and how unwilling he was to comply with it, and the difficulty in every man's way of entrance into the kingdom of God, spoke as follows:

Lo,

Lo, we have left all] The Arabic version reads, *all ours*; all we had, our friends, trades, and worldly substance;

And followed thee] In *Matt. xix. 27.* it is added, *What shall we have therefore?* Referring to the promise of Christ to the young man, that should he sell all he had, and give it to the poor, he should have treasure in heaven; see the note there.

29 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

He said to his disciples, as the Ethiopic version reads; though the Syriac and Perfic versions read, "and Jesus said to him;" that is, to Peter; he particularly replied to him:

Verily I say unto you, There is no man] Not only you shall have peculiar honour done you, as to sit on thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel; but there is not a single person of a more private character,

That hath left house] Or *houses*, as read the Syriac and Perfic versions;

Or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake] That is, for Christ's sake, and for the sake of his Gospel, as the other Evangelists have it, and which teaches us how to understand the kingdom of God here, and elsewhere.

30 Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

Not more houses, parents, brethren, &c. but that which is abundantly preferable to them; such comfort, peace, satisfaction, and pleasure, as are not to be found in such enjoyments:

And in the world to come life everlasting] Which was what the young man was desirous of inheriting, *Mat. 18.* see the note on *Matt. xix. 29.*

31 ¶ Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.

His twelve disciples, as the Ethiopic version expresses it; he took them aside from the rest of the company, as they were travelling on the road, and privately delivered to them what follows; see *Matt. xx. 17.*

And said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem] To the feast of the passover, which was drawing near, and the last Christ was to eat with his disciples, the time of his sufferings, and death, being

now at hand; and of which he thought fit to give his disciples notice: and therefore he called them aside; and, in a private manner, told them

That all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished] Particularly, *Psal. ii. 1, 2.* and *xxii. 6—8.* *Isai. l. 6.* *Micah v. 1.* *Isa. liii. 5, 6, 12.* *Psal. xxii. 15.* and *xvi. 10.* *Hos. vi. 2.* for to these the following things have respect.

32 For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on:

As he was delivered by the chief priests, scribes and elders, to Pilate, the Roman governor, and by him to the soldiers:

And shall be mocked] As he was by the latter, when they crowned him with thorns, arrayed him in a purple robe, and put a reed into his hand, and bowed the knee to him, saying, *Hail king of the Jews*; and likewise by the Jews when he hung upon the cross:

And spitefully intreated] The Syriac and Perfic versions leave out this clause here, and read it in the next verse. It may regard the injuries done him, the abuses and affronts he received, both by words and blows:

And spitted on] As he was, both by the officers in the high priest's palace, and by the Roman soldiers in Pilate's hall; see *Isai. l. 6.*

33 And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.

As he was scourged by Pilate's order, before he was crucified:

And put him to death] A shameful, and a painful one, the death of the cross:

And the third day he shall rise again] As he accordingly did.

34 And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

"Not one of them," as the Syriac and Perfic versions render it; every article of his sufferings and death were unintelligible by them; they knew not how to understand him in any one point; or how to reconcile these things to the notions they had entertained of the temporal grandeur and glory of the Messiah, and his kingdom; and which shews their great ignorance of the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning these things.

And this saying] Or *thing*; for it answers to the Hebrew word *דבר* which signifies any affair, or matter,

matter, as well as a word, or saying: and so here, the whole of this affair

Was hid from them] Unless it should have a peculiar regard to that part of it which expresses his resurrection from the dead; see *Mark* ix. 10. or the delivery of him to the Gentiles, *Luke* ix. 44, 45.

Neither knew they the things which were spoken] The meaning of them. The Ethiopic version leaves out this, and puts the former clause, by way of question, "And he said unto them, And is this saying hid from you?"

35. ¶ And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way-side begging:

Jericho, &c.] Which lay in his way to Jerusalem:

A certain blind man sat by the way-side begging] This was not blind Bartimeus, nor his companion, for they were cured by Christ as he went out of Jericho; but this man before he came to it; for we afterwards read of his entrance into, and passing through Jericho, chapter xix. 1. though much the same things are related in this account, as in that of the other two blind men; see the note on *Matt.* xx. 30.

36 And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.

"Hearing their voice," as the Syriac version expresses it; the noise of their feet, and especially of their tongues;

He asked what it meant?] What was the meaning of this concourse of people, and of this clamorous noise; or, as the Syriac version reads, "who it should be?" What person of note was passing by, that there was such a multitude after him? To which the answer best agrees.

37 And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

Some of the company answered him, that Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth, so much talked of, and said to be the Messiah, who was become so famous for his doctrines and miracles, for healing diseases and dispossessing devils, was just then passing by; and this occasioned the noise and clamour.

38 And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me.

Believing him, at once, to be the Messiah; whence he calls him the Son of David, which was a character and title of the Messiah well known to the Jews; see the note on *Matt.* i. 1. and therefore immediately called out unto him, being willing to take that opportunity as he passed, and whilst he was within hearing, to make his suit to him for his sight:

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Saying, Have mercy on me] A poor blind, and miserable creature, and restore me to my sight, which will be an act of singular mercy and goodness; and will always be gratefully owned as such.

39 And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, Thou son of David, have mercy on me.

Went before, &c.] In the company that preceded Christ; for he, as yet, was not come right over-against the blind man:

Rebuked him, that he should hold his peace] Being not well pleased that he should call him the Son of David, which was acknowledging him to be the Messiah; or that he might not be troublesome to Christ, and retard his journey:

But he cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me] He neither dropped the character of Christ, nor his request to him; but called out more loudly, and with greater vehemence, earnestness, and importunity: so persons sensible of their need of Christ, and of his worth, excellency and ability, are not to be discouraged from an application to him, by whatsoever they meet with from men or devils.

40 And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him,

Jesus stood still; he made a full stop, and went no further, when, it is very likely, he was just over-against him:

And commanded him to be brought unto him] Either by the disciples, or by some of the multitude:

And when he was come near, he asked him] The following question;

41 Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.

Saying, &c.] Is it alms thou askest? or is it thy sight thou wouldst have restored?

And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight] This he chose, this was his request, and what he cried so vehemently for; and which he believed Christ, the Son of David, was able to do for him.

42 And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee.

Be it to thee as thou desirest; look up and see. Thus by a word speaking, and power going along with it, without making use of any means, he fulfilled his desire.

Thy faith hath saved thee] Or has obtained salvation for thee, a temporal salvation; and it may

K k

be

be also a spiritual, and an eternal one: for that is the concern faith has in salvation; it is the means of obtaining and enjoying it: Christ the object of faith, is the author of it.

43 And immediately he received his sight and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.

As soon as ever the word was gone out of Christ's mouth, virtue went forth from him, and cured the man of his blindness; his eyes were at once opened, and he saw as other men:

And followed him] His kind benefactor, with a grateful sense of his goodness, with strong affection for him, and faith in him:

Glorifying God] Who had sent such a Saviour to him; who had wrought such a wonderful miracle for him; for he was sensible, that none but God could do this.

And all the people when they saw it] What was done, how, that the man they just before saw was blind, and begging by the way-side, now had his sight restored to him, in an instant, and was following Jesus in the crowd, along with them:

Gave praise unto God] Or, as Beza's most ancient copy reads, *glory*; they ascribed the glory to God, and praised his name, that he had raised up the Messiah among them; of which this was a clear proof, inasmuch as the eyes of the blind were opened, according to *Isaiah xxxv. 5*.

CHAPTER XIX.

In this chapter is related the conversion of Zaccheus the publican, at Jericho: he being desirous of seeing Christ climbeth up a tree, *ſ. 5, 6*. He entertaineth Christ at his house, *ſ. 6—11*. The parable of the ten pieces of silver, *ſ. 12—27*. Christ rideth to Jerusalem, *ſ. 28—36*. The multitude praise him with songs, *ſ. 37—40*. He weepeth over Jerusalem, and foretelleth its ruin, *ſ. 41—44*. He purgeth the temple, *ſ. 45, 46*. The chief priests and scribes lay a snare for his life, *ſ. 47, 48*.

1. **A**ND Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.

Though the word *Jesus* is not in the original text, it is rightly supplied in our version; as it is also in the Syriac, Persian, and Ethiopic versions; for of him the words are manifestly spoken: after he had healed the blind man he met with near to Jericho, he entered into it, but made no stay in it, passed through it at once, without stopping, though a very populous city; but here he had no work, either to perform miracles, or to convert sinners;

though he did both before he entered, and after he passed through it.

2 And, behold, there was a man named Zaccheus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

Or זכאי *Zaccai*, a name in use among the Jews; see *Ezra ii. 9*. We often read of זכאי Rabbi *Zaccai*, or *Zaccheus* (a), and very frequently of R. Jochanan ben *Zaccai*, a famous doctor that lived in the times of Christ, and even till after the destruction of Jerusalem. The Jews also make mention of one R. *Zaccai*, a prince of the seed of David the king, in later times (b). So that this man, as appears by his name, was a Jew, though some have thought him to have been a Gentile (c), perhaps because of his employment: but it does not follow from thence; for there were Jews that were publicans, as *Levi*, or *Matthew*, afterwards one of Christ's disciples; and also in Jewish writings, mention is made, as of זכאי נכרי "a stranger," or a Gentile publican (d); so likewise of זכאי ישראלי "an Israelite publican (e)," and such an one was *Zaccheus*, as follows:

Which was chief among the publicans] The head of them in that place, to whom the rest brought the tax, tribute, or toll; he was the receiver-general of the tax: at the toll-booths, at bridges, for peoples going over the water, there was, זכאי גדול "the greater publican," and זכאי קטן "the lesser publican (f)," who was deputy to the other. What sort of tax *Zaccheus* was concerned in collecting, is not certain; however, he was a principal man in this employ, and had got great riches by it.

And he was rich] Was a person of figure among the publicans, and of substance, which he had gained in his post. And though the instances of rich men being called by grace, are few, yet there have been some; and the rather this circumstance is mentioned, because it had been observed in the preceding chapter, how difficult, but not impossible, as this instance proves, it was for rich men to enter into the kingdom of God.

3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.

To see, &c.] What sort of a person he was for complexion, stature, and age: having heard much of

(a) T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 27. 2. & Yebamot, fol. 77. 2. Nazir, fol. 38. 1. & Nidda, fol. 41. 2. & Juchasin, fol. 90. 2.

(b) R. Benjamin Itinerar. p. 61. 94. (c) Tertull. contr. Marcion. l. 4. c. 37. (d) T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 113. 1.

(e) Maimon. & Birtenora in Mifn. Bava Kama, c. 10. §. 3. (f) T. Bab. Sabbath, fol. 78. 2.

of him, he was very desirous of indulging his curiosity with a sight of him; having, as yet, nothing else that induced him to desire to see him: his desire to see Jesus was not of the same kind with that of the kings and prophets, *Matt. xiii. 16.* but rather like that of Herod, *Luke xxiii. 8.*

And could not for the press] The multitude of people that were flocking to meet Jesus, or who came before him, or were about him; for one part of the multitude went before him, and the other followed after him: so that he was in the crowd, and therefore could not easily be seen;

Because he was little of stature] The Syriac and Persic versions read, "because Zaccheus was little of stature," left it should be thought that this is said of Jesus; for the reason why Zaccheus could not see him for the crowd, was not because Christ was little of stature, and so was hid among them, but because Zaccheus was little of stature, and could not see over their heads.

4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.

Ran before Jesus, and the company that was with him; so very desirous was he of seeing him:

And climbed up into a sycamore-tree to see him] Which sort of trees were very common about Jericho: hence we read of *קראב עץ* "beams of sycamore in Jericho," which those that were strong took up in their arms, and the owners stood and devoted them to God (g); and among the things which the men of Jericho did, this was one, that they permitted the branches of trees devoted to sacred uses, and of the *charub* tree, and of the *sycamore*, to be cut down and used (h). This sort of trees used to grow in plains and valleys, as appears from some passages of scripture, *1 Kings x. 27.* *2 Chron. ix. 27.* and from Jewish writings (i); and certain it is, that Jericho was in such a situation. Josephus (k) says, it was seated in a plain; and Strabo says (l), that Jericho is a plain surrounded with mountains; to which agrees the account that Justin (m) gives of it. "There is a valley, which is inclosed by mountains on all sides, as with a wall, like a castle; the space of the place is two hundred acres, and it is called *Jericho*." Hence we read of the plains and valley of Jericho in scripture, *Deut. xxxiv. 3.* *2 Kings xxv. 5.* so that it is very probable sycamore-trees grew there in great plenty; though the place was more famous for palm-trees: hence it is called *the city of the palm-trees*, *Deut. xxxiv. 3.* *Judges iii. 13.* which

the Targumist, in both places, interprets, *the city of Jericho*: to which agree the accounts given of it by Pliny (n), Strabo (o), and Justin (p), who all affirm, that it abounded with palm-trees; and the latter says also with balsam-trees, from the sweet smell of which it might have its name: so the Jews say (q), the ointment of balsam is called the ointment of our land, because it grows in Jericho, and because of the smell of it, it is called *Jericho*; though some think it has its name from the plain, being in the form of a half-moon; the tree moon, in the Hebrew language, being called *רמ* (r). This tree seems to have been without the city: and indeed, according to the Jewish canon, it ought to be, which runs thus (s); "They set a tree at a distance from a city, twenty and five cubits, but a charub-tree, and sycamore, fifty cubits." The reason of the greater distance of the latter is, as one of their commentators says (t), because their branches were large; and this is the reason why Zaccheus went up into one of these trees, because it was large and able to bear him, and tall, from whence he could have a full view of Christ:

For he was to pass that way] Or rather, *pass by that*; for the word *way* is not in the text; and the sense is, he was to pass by that tree; or *under it*, as the Arabic version renders it. The tree stood by the road-side, in which Jesus came, for which reason Zaccheus made choice of it, as fit for his purpose.

5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.

Came to the place where the tree stood in which Zaccheus was. Christ knows where his people are, and where to find them, where they commonly dwell, or where at any time they are, he being God omniscient: besides, the bounds of their habitations are fixed by the determination and appointment of God, and were foreknown by Christ, who, before the world began, was *residing in the habitable part of his earth*, where he knew his saints would dwell, who are the *sons of men*, with whom his delights were; and he knows where they are, when the time is come to call them: he knew Zaccheus was in the sycamore-tree, as he saw *Nathaniel under the fig-tree*, before Philip called him, *John i. 48.* and Christ comes to the very place where his people are, either in person, as here; and

(g) T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 57. 1. & Juchasin, fol. 69. 2.

(h) T. Bab. Menschat, fol. 71. 1. & Pesachim, fol. 56. 1.

(i) Misna Sheviith, c. 9. §. 2. (j) De Bello Jud. l. 4. c. 27.

(k) Geograph. l. 16.

(m) Hist. l. 36. c. 3.

(n) Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 14.

(o) Ut supra.

(p) Ib. d.

(q) Gloss. in T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 43. 1.

(r) Vid. Ma-

sum in Job. c. 2. p. 17.

(s) Misna Bava Bathra, c. 2.

§. 7.

(t) Bartenora in ibid.

and so he came to Galilee, and to the sea there, and walked by it, and on the very spot, where he knew he should meet with Peter, and Andrew, and James, and John, whom he called to follow him, *Matt. iv. 13, 18, 21.* He came to his own city Capernaum, and to the place of receipt of custom near unto it, where Matthew was, and called him, *Matt. ix. 1, 9.* and he came to Samaria, and to Jacob's well, where he knew the woman of Samaria would be at such a time, in order to call her: or, though he comes not in person to others, where they are, yet by his word and by his Spirit: and he comes to them before they come to him; and is found of them, and finds them who sought him not; and is made manifest to them, who asked not for him. And in this he acts the part of the good shepherd, that leaves the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and goes after that which is lost till he finds it; and agreeable to his character as a Saviour, and to the end of his coming into the world, which was to call sinners to repentance, and to seek and save that which is lost, *Y. 10.*

He looked up, and saw him.] He knew him, he being one of those the Father had given to him, and he had loved and undertook for; and was come into the world to seek, and to save; and now, at this time, was come hither to call by his grace. He had seen him before in the glass of his Father's purposes and decrees, he being chosen in him to grace and glory, and being a vessel of mercy, afore prepared for glory: he had seen him when he was brought into the bond of the covenant; and passed under the rod of him, that telleth all the covenant ones, as they were put into it, and given to him the mediator of it: he had seen him among them that were lost in Adam, whom he came to recover out of the ruin of their fall in him; and now he saw him in his state of nature and unregeneracy; he saw him in his blood, and said unto him, *Live:* this look was a look of love, grace, and mercy; he looked upon him, and loved him, and was gracious to him, and had compassion on him; and it was a distinguishing look, he looked on him, and not on others. There was a great crowd both before and behind him, and all about him; but he looked not on these, but he looked up to Zaccheus;

And he said unto him, Zaccheus.] He knew him, and could call him by his name, as he did Saul, when he called him, and revealed himself to him. His name was written in the Lamb's book of life, and so must be known to Christ, who was present at the making of that book, and was concerned in setting down the names in it, and has it in his keeping: he was one of the sheep the Father had given him, he came to lay down his life for, and

of whom he had such perfect knowledge as to call them by name, as he does all the chosen and redeemed ones; see *Isaiah xliii. 1, John x. 3.* It must be very surprising to Zaccheus to hear Christ call him by his name, who was an utter stranger to him, and whom he had never seen before; and it is a very considerable instance of the omniscience of Christ, as well of the great condescension and affectionate regard he has to the own, and the familiar way in which he uses them.

Make haste, and come down.] From the tree. The dangerous estate and condition of a sinner requires haste; it is like that of Lot in Sodom, when it was just going to be destroyed; and like that of the manslayer, when pursued by the avenger of blood; both whom it became to escape for their lives, and flee for refuge as fast as they could: and so it became Zaccheus to come down with all speed to Christ, who was come hither to call and save him; and the enjoyment of Christ, and his grace, calls for haste; see *John xi. 28, 29.* Such who come to Christ, must quit all their exalted thoughts of themselves, of their riches, fulness, and self-sufficiency; and come to him as poor and needy, for such only he fills with his good things: and of their health and soundness, and come to him the great physician, as sick and diseased; and of their purity and goodness, holiness and righteousness, and come to him as sinners: but it must be mighty grace to cast down imaginations, and high things, that exalt themselves against Christ, and the knowledge of him, and to humble a proud sinner, and bring him to the feet of Jesus.

For this day I must abide at thy house.] For a little while; not so much for the sake of refreshment for himself and his disciples, as for Zaccheus's good; to make known the great salvation to him, and to bestow his grace upon him, and converse with him in a spiritual way.

6 And he made haste and came down, and received him joyfully.

Such power went along with the words of Christ, that they immediately reached his heart, awakened his conscience, affected his mind, and drew his soul to Christ, and knit him to Christ, that he made all imaginable haste to be with him. So souls sensible of their dangerous state and condition by nature, and apprehensive of impending ruin and destruction, and having some intimation of safety and happiness in Christ, and being filled with love to him, and a liking of him, flee with all haste to him for refuge, for righteousness, peace, pardon, life, and salvation:

And came down.] From the tree he had climbed merely to indulge his curiosity, little thinking that he

he should be called by name by him; that he should have him a guest at his house, and have such a knowledge of him, and familiar acquaintance with him: so souls, when called by Christ, and made sensible of their need of him, and the worth there is in him, quit their former post and place, part with their carnal lusts and sinful companions, and renounce their own righteousness and works, and come as sinners, humble and lowly, and venture upon Christ:

And received him joyfully] Not only into his house, but into his arms and heart: Christ was a welcome guest to him, as he is to every sensible sinner, who by faith receives him, as the Father's free gift; as the alone Saviour and Redeemer; as the great Mediator; in all his offices, of prophet, priest, and king; and in every relation and character he bears; and embraces his doctrines, and submits to his ordinances, and that with the greatest joy; as there is reason for it, since with him, he receives the free and full forgiveness of his sins, a justifying righteousness, an abundance of grace, and a right unto, and meetness for heaven.

7 And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

The Vulgate, Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions read, "when they all saw this;" that is, as the Persian version, rather paraphrasing than translating, says, "the men and the multitude that were with him;" the pharisaical sort, the priests and Levites, of which there were great numbers in Jericho; see the note on chapter x. 31.

They all murmured] As the scribes and Pharisees did, at his eating with publicans and sinners, chapter xv. 2.

Saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner] A notorious one, an abandoned profligate creature; one of the worst of sinners, as being a publican, and the chief of them; who had amassed vast riches to himself by extortion and oppression: and they thought it was not agreeable to the character of a holy man, and a venerable prophet, which Christ bore, to go into such a man's house, eat at his table, and have familiar conversation with him; see *Matt.* ix. 10.

8 And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.

He stood before Christ, out of respect to him, and reverence of him; and in the presence of others,

to make a public confession before them, that they might all hear it, when come to his own house:

And said unto the Lord] That is, to Jesus, as the Syriac and Persian versions, and some copies read; he addressed himself to Christ, and made his confession to him, as the Israelite, when he brought the basket of the first-fruits to the priest, *confessed before the Lord his God*, Deut. xxvi. 5. And the rather Zaccheus directed his speech to Christ, being, as he was now convinced, the discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart; who knew the genuineness of his repentance, that it was hearty and real; and the sincerity of his expressions and resolutions, and upon what principles he acted, and proposed to do as follows:

Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give unto the poor] Not to make satisfaction for the sins he had committed, but to testify his sense of them, and his repentance for them, and as willing to do good with what he had gotten; which shews, that the disposition of his mind was altered, and of a covetous oppressor, he was become tender, kind, and liberal. According to an order made by the Jews in Usha, a man might not give away more than a fifth part of his estate, unless in some extraordinary cases (u); and we read of one, that gave a third part of his goods to the poor (w); and of another, that gave, as here, half of his mammon, or wealth (x); and another, half of his food to the poor (y); and of another, that gave away all his goods away to them (z); see 1 Cor. xiii. 3. to give a tenth part, was reckoned a medium (a):

And if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation] Or by extorting any thing from him on any pretence, by making an unjust demand upon him; or in any oppressive way, by defrauding and tricking, and by doing him any injury, in any form or manner:

I restore him fourfold] The same that was done in case of sheep-stealing, *Exod.* xxii. 1. but in such a case as this, the law only required the principal, with the fifth part added to it; see *Levit.* vi. 5. *Numb.* v. 7. but Zaccheus proposes as much as in the case of theft, and which was rarely used. The Jews (b) say, "That the manner of paying double, was more used than the manner of paying fourfold, or fivefold; for the manner of paying double was used both in things animate and inanimate; but the manner of paying fourfold and fivefold, was used but with respect to an ox, and a sheep only." This was done by Zaccheus,

(u) T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 50. 1. & Maimon. in *Misna* Peah, c. 1. §. 1.

(w) T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 44. 1.

(x) T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 67. 2.

(y) *Juchasin*, fol. 105. 2.

(z) T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 15. 2.

(a) Maimon. *Hilchot*

Mattanot Anayim, c. 7. §. 5.

(b) *Misat Bava Kama*, c. 7. §. 1.

cheus, to shew the truth and reality of his repentance; for with that nation, "The repentance of," shepherds, and of collectors, and of publicans, "is said (c) to be very difficult." The reason given by the gloss is, because they rob many, and do not know who to return to.

9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

The Persic version reads, "Jesus said to the multitude, and to his disciples;" to which well enough agree the following words:

This day is salvation come to this house] To the master of it, and it may be to others in it; the Arabic version reads, "to the inhabitants of this house." The Persic version reads, "great salvation;" by which may be meant, the Gospel, as in *Heb. ii. 3.* so called, because it brings the account of salvation by Christ, which is not discoverable by the light of nature, nor made known by the law of Moses; but the Gospel publishes and proclaims it: the ministers of it shew unto men the way of salvation, and direct them, and encourage to go to Christ for it; likewise the Gospel is the means of bringing near this salvation, and of applying it to them; and when it comes with the demonstration of the Spirit, it is *the power of God unto salvation*; and this might be truly said to come to Zaccheus's house; inasmuch as Christ, the great preacher of it, and by whom it first began to be spoken, and was spoken by him as it never was by any one besides, was now in his house, preaching it; the sum and substance of which, lies in the words delivered by him in the following verse; and the Gospel came to him to purpose, and was effectual: sometimes it comes to a people, city, town, or family, and it is rejected, and becomes of no effect; but here it came to Zaccheus, and into him; and wrought effectually in him, as his words in the preceding verse declare: moreover, the blessing of salvation itself, which is wrought out by Christ, and published in the Gospel, was brought home to him; he was not only made sensible that he stood in need of salvation, but this was brought near unto him, and set before him, and applied to him; he had not only hopes of it, but faith of interest in it; it was made known unto him, that Christ was his salvation; and it was revealed and applied to the rest of the family, as well as to him: sometimes the Lord takes one of a city, and two of a family; and sometimes whole families, as Lydia's and the jailor's, and here Zaccheus's, as seems probable; for by his house may be meant, his family: though

this may be understood of Christ, the author of salvation; who came into his house in a literal sense, as well as in a spiritual sense; and was made known to Zaccheus, as his Saviour and Redeemer. The Alexandrian copy reads, "in this house:" it follows,

Forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham] These words are to be considered, either as a reason, or evidence, of salvation being come to his house; and therefore cannot be understood of him as a son of Abraham by natural descent: he was indeed a Jew, as appears by his name, and by his knowledge of the Jewish law, concerning restoration; and which may be confirmed by the silence of the Pharisees, who murmured at Christ's going along with him; who, had he been a Gentile, would not have failed to have mentioned it; but then, though this might be a reason justifying Christ in going to his house, who did not exceed the bounds of his office, as the minister of the circumcision, and as *sent*, and that *only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*; yet this could be no reason of spiritual salvation coming to him, which was not confined to Abraham's natural seed, nor was it necessary to them, more than others, and much less general; and indeed, very few of them then in being partook of it; for though salvation was of them, and Christ the Saviour came unto them, yet they rejected him, and died in their sins: nor is this a reason of salvation coming to his family; for tho' by virtue of the covenant of circumcision, made with Abraham and his natural seed, there were many outward privileges bestowed upon them, yet spiritual salvation was not insured by it to them; and with regard to that, natural descent from Abraham, and circumcision, were of no avail: but this is to be understood of him, as a son of Abraham in a spiritual sense, he being now a believer in Christ, and so *one that walked in the steps of the faith of Abraham*; and this was an evidence of his interest in salvation by Christ, the blessing with which he was blessed, with faithful Abraham: and also his being a son of Abraham, which is no other than to be a child of the promise, *Rom. ix. 8.* or in other words, one of God's elect, a chosen vessel of salvation, was a reason why Christ, the author of salvation, came to him; why the Gospel of salvation was made known to him, and why the blessing of salvation was applied to him. The Jews use this phrase, not only of one whose natural descent is from Abraham, but whose knowledge in divine things is considerable: so "when R. Eliezer ben Arach taught the Mercavah, (the mystery of Ezekiel's visions,) R. Jochanan ben Zaccai stood and kissed his head, and said, Blessed art thou, O God of Israel, that has given, לאברהם בן "a son to Abraham," who has knowledge "to understand, and to search out, and to explain the

(c) T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 94, 2.

“the work of *Marcova* (d).” For Abraham is said to (e) be a father in that sort of knowledge; for which reason, this man was genealogized a son of Abraham.

10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Meaning himself, who was truly man and the Messiah, and which was one of his names in the Old-Testament:

Is come] From heaven, into this world, being sent by the Father, and with the full consent and good-will of his own:

To seek and to save that which was lost] As all his elect were in Adam, and by their own actual transgressions; and are considered as such, whilst in a state of unregeneracy: and particularly the lost sheep of the house of Israel are meant, one of which Zaccheus was; and so the words are a reason of Christ's looking him up, and calling him by his grace, and making a discovery of himself, and an application of salvation to him; see *Matt. xviii. 11*.

11 ¶ And as he heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

Heard what Zaccheus said to Christ, and what Christ said to Zaccheus; particularly, that salvation, or the Saviour, was then come to his house, and that he was come to save lost persons;

He added and spake a parable] That is, as the Syriac version renders it, “he added a parable to the word,” or to what he had said:

Because he was nigh to Jerusalem] Within ten *parfas*, or large miles; for at such a distance was Jerusalem from Jericho (f), where Christ now was, according to the Jewish writers; but according to Josephus (g), it was a hundred and fifty furlongs, which must be eighteen or twenty miles, and this may be said to be nigh; and not long after this, we hear of Christ at the mount of Olives, which was about a mile from Jerusalem, *y. 29*.

And because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear] Or be revealed, or made manifest: the phrase is Jewish; so *Cant. ii. 12*. The time of the singing of birds is come, is interpreted (h), the time that the kingdom of heaven shall be revealed, is come: and elsewhere (i), “Say to the cities of the house of Judah, אלהיכם מלכותם” “the kingdom of your God

is revealed;” meaning in both places, as here, the kingdom of the Messiah: what induced the disciples of Christ, or the multitude, or both, to imagine that the temporal kingdom of the Messiah, which they were expecting, would quickly be set up, might be what he had said to Zaccheus, that *salvation was that day come to his house, he being a son of Abraham*; which they understanding of a temporal salvation, took it as a hint, that the outward prosperity of the seed of Abraham was at hand; as also what he had said, concerning his coming to seek and to save that which is lost; which they were willing to interpret, of the civil state of Judea; and that he was come to restore its lost liberties and privileges; and partly, because he was now not a great way from Jerusalem, and was on his journey thither, in order to make his entrance in a very public manner; which was the metropolis of their nation, and the ancient seat of their kings, David, Solomon, and others. Now the scope and design of the following parable, is to refute the notion of a temporal kingdom, and its near approach; by shewing, that his kingdom lay a great way off, and was not of this world; and that his servants and disciples, had a great deal of business to transact for him, and must not think of pomp and grandeur, but of labour and service; and that the Jews were so far from receiving any advantages by his kingdom, that they would not submit to his government, and would be treated as enemies, and utterly destroyed; even their nation, city, and temple.

12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

He spoke the following parable, with the above-said design and view.

A certain nobleman] “The son of a great family,” as the Syriac version renders it; of noble descent, of an illustrious extract; by whom is meant Jesus Christ, who was a man, as he agreed to be, and was prophesied of as such; and who frequently appeared in an human form before his incarnation; and was now actually become man, though not a mere man; and he may be truly said to be noble; not only as the word may signify, as it sometimes does, a person of great authority and power, and of great generosity and goodness, but one of a noble birth; for Christ, as man, descended from the kings of the house of Judah, and was the Son of David; and from the Jewish fathers and ancestors of the greatest renown, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and he may be so called as man, because of the union of the human nature to the Son of God; or because of his divine relation, as the Son of God; this illustrious person,

(d) T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 74. 2.

(e) Caphtor, fol. 69. 1.

(f) Bartenora in Misna Tamid, c. 7. §. 8.

(g) De Bello

Jud. l. 4. c. 27.

(h) Shichshirim Rabba, fol. 11. 4.

(i) Targum in Isa. xl. 9.

Went into a far country] By which, heaven is meant; so called, not only because of its distance from the earth, but in comparison of the earth, as a place of pilgrimage; and because that it is out of sight, and the views which are had of it, are very distant ones: hither Christ went at his ascension; he came from heaven at his incarnation, by the assumption of human nature; he staid here a while, till he had done his work he came about, and then went up to heaven; where he is received, and from whence he is expected again: the end of his going there is,

To receive for himself a kingdom] By which is intended, not the kingdom of nature and providence; for that he had, and did not receive from another; it was his of right, and by nature; nor the kingdom of grace, set up in the hearts of his people, and which was already within many of them; nor the kingdom of glory, prepared for them from the foundation of the world; though into this he entered at his ascension, and took possession of it for himself and them; but a more visible display of his mediatorial kingdom, he received from his Father; and which, upon his ascension, became more manifest, by the dispossessing of Satan, and casting him out of the Gentile world; by converting large numbers of his people, both among Jews and Gentiles; and by ruling in their hearts, subduing their enemies, and protecting and defending them; and by thus reigning till he has gathered them all in, either in Judea, or in the whole world, and then he will come again:

And return] Either to destroy the Jews; the doing of which fully proved he had received his kingdom, was vested with power and authority, and was made, or declared Lord and Christ; or at the end of the world, to judge both quick and dead: and this is said, to show that his personal glorious kingdom on earth, or his kingdom in its greatest glory here, will not be till he comes a second time; and to engage diligence in his servants in the mean while; and to keep up the faith, hope, and expectation of his coming again.

13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

By whom are meant, not all mankind; for though these are all his servants of right, yet not in fact; nor the elect of God, who are called by grace; for though these are the servants of Christ, and are peculiarly his, yet all that received the pound were not such, for one of them was a wicked man; but the ministers of the Gospel, who are eminently, and in a special manner, the servants of the most high God: but as for the number *ten*,

this cannot regard the apostles, for they were twelve; and though they are sometimes called the eleven, after the apostasy and death of Judas, yet not the ten; and besides, there was another chose in his room; but this number being a large and perfect one, a round number, it is sometimes made use of as a certain number for an uncertain one; see *Matthew xxv. 1.* The call of these by their lord, is not to be understood of the call of them by his grace, but of the call of them to the office and work of the ministry:

And delivered them ten pounds] Every one a pound: the מנה *Maneh*, or pound of the Hebrews, if of gold, which contained an hundred drachmas, was of the value of our money, seventy-five pounds; if of silver, the old *Maneh*, or pound, which contained sixty shekels, *Ezek. xlv. 12.* amounted to seven pounds ten shillings; but the *Maneh*, or pound, mentioned in the *Misna* (k), and which was in use in our Lord's time, contained an hundred pence, and was of the value of our money, three pounds two shillings and sixpence: and by these pounds are designed, not special grace; for they intend not any thing wrought in these servants, but something delivered to them, and what might be taken away again, which cannot be said of special grace; and besides, it is certain, that one of these servants that had the pound, was destitute of that: but gifts are meant, and these not merely natural, or the gifts of providence, as health, riches, wisdom, &c. nor only the outward means of grace, as the word and ordinances; but ministerial gifts, which are the greatest in the church, and are therefore signified by *pounds*; and are what may be improved or neglected, and be lost or taken away; and for which those that have them are accountable. But though each of these servants are represented as having every man a pound delivered to him, this must not be understood as if the gifts of ministers were equal and alike, any more than the inequality of their rewards, proves degrees in glory; for which sometimes this parable is produced:

And said unto him, Occupy] Negotiate, or trade, that is, with the pounds; make use of the ministerial gifts, exercise them, lay them out, and trade with them. The ministry is a trade and merchandize, to be carried on, not in the name of the ministers of Christ, nor on their own stock, nor for themselves, but for Christ, and for the good of souls; which shews, that they must not be slothful, but laborious and diligent;

Till I come] Which suggests the certainty of Christ's coming, the continuance of the Gospel-ministry to that time; and that there is no rest nor ease for Christ's ministers, but a continued series of

(1) Pesh, c. 8. §. 5. & Maimon. & Bartenora in loc.

labour and service, until then; when, for their encouragement, they shall receive their reward.

14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us:

Not those who are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; whose citizenship is in heaven, and who are seeking the better country, and heavenly city; but the Jews, who were his own people and nation, among whom he was born, to whom he was sent and came, and had an undoubted right to the government of them: these hated him with a mortal hatred, as appeared by their traducing his person in the most opprobrious manner; villifying his doctrine as false; ascribing his miracles to a diabolical influence; and by persecuting his disciples and followers:

And sent a message after him] This seems to have respect to their outrage against the disciples of Christ after his ascension; when they not only mocked them, as on the day of Pentecost, but seized on them, and put them in hold, even in the common prison, and persecuted them from place to place; and so, virtually,

Saying, We will not have this man to reign over us] They would neither receive his Gospel, nor submit to his ordinances; but put them away from them, and judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life: and this is the language of every graceless soul; and is to be observed in their opposition to and neglect of the truths of Christ, and his divine institutions; which are a yoke they do not care to take upon them, though so mild and easy, and are cords which they cast away from them.

15 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

Which return was either in power to Jerusalem, in the destruction of that city; or which will be in person to this earth, at the end of the world; and will be local and visible, and in great glory, attended with the holy angels, and with all the saints: the time is fixed and certain, though unknown, and will be sudden and unexpected; but will not be till after the Gospel has had a general spread all over the world, and the Jews are converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in, and then will Christ come:

Having received the kingdom] Not only having been set down at the right hand of God, and crown-

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ed with glory and honour, and received gifts for men, which he bestowed on them; and which proved him to be Lord and Christ; all which was done at his ascension, after which his kingdom came, or he returned in power and glory to take vengeance on the Jews; but also having received the kingdom of glory for all his saints, and particularly having received the kingdom of priests, or all the elect of God, these being all called by grace, and gathered to him, as they will be every one of them before his second coming; when this kingdom will be delivered to the Father complete and perfect; and this will be a reckoning-time, as follows;

Then he commanded those servants to be called, to whom he had given the money] The servants are the ministers of the word, who must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; and give an account of themselves to God, the judge of all; and of their gifts and talents, and ministrations, and the souls under their care: the persons who are commanded to call them, are the angels, and who shall be employed in gathering all the elect together; the thing that will be inquired about, and must be accounted for, is the money given them; that is, the Gospel they are entrusted with, and the gifts to preach it bestowed on them: the end of this summons is,

That he might know how much every man had gained by trading] Not but that Christ, who is the omniscient God, a searcher of the heart, and a discern-er of the thoughts and intents of it, knows full well the use that is made of every man's gift, and the benefits and advantages arising from it, both for his own glory, and the good of souls; but these summons will be given, this account taken, and inquiry made, that these things which are known to him, might be made manifest to all, and every man have praise of God; whose will it is that he should have it, and sloth and negligence be justly punished.

16 Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

Those who were set in the first place in the church, the apostles of Christ, and who had the greatest gifts, and laboured more abundantly, and were eminently useful; such an one was the apostle Paul:

Saying, Lord] Acknowledging the sovereignty and dominion of Christ over them, owning they were accountable to him, and that he had a right to inquire what use they had made of their gifts, and what advantages these had produced.

Thy pound hath gained ten pounds] It had been increased tenfold; or it has turned to a tenfold account, in the conversion of sinners, in the edifica-

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tion

tion of the saints, and in the advancement of the kingdom and interest of Christ. This servant owns that the gifts he had were Christ's; he calls them, *thy pound*; and therefore did not glory in them as his own attainments, or, as if he had received them not; and ascribes the great increase, not to himself, but to the pound itself; to the gifts of Christ, as they were his, and as used by his grace and strength, and as blessed, and owned by him to these purposes.

17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

Signifying he had well done, and had approved himself to be an honest, diligent, and laborious servant; who, having the grace of God, which made him a good man, and gifts and abilities, which made him a good minister of Christ, he made a good use of them, freely communicated the good things of the Gospel, and being employed in a good work, he performed it well:

Because thou hast been faithful in a very little] Had preached the pure Gospel of Christ, and the whole of it, and sought not to please men, but the Lord only; not his own glory, but Christ's; and abode by him and his interest, notwithstanding all reproaches and persecutions, and so acted a faithful part to Christ:

In a very little] Not that the Gospel is in itself little, or of small account; it is a *treasure in earthen vessels*; and contains the unsearchable riches of Christ: nor are gifts to preach it little things; they are instances of rich and amazing grace; but they are little, or rather, the use and exercise of them are little, in comparison of the glory and happiness such faithful servants shall enjoy: from whence it appears, that since there is no proportion between what they do, and what they shall have, that therefore it is not of merit, but of grace; and which is expressed in the following clause:

Have thou authority over ten cities] Which is to be understood, not in a literal sense, as if the apostles should have the jurisdiction over so many cities, or churches in so many cities among the Gentiles, after the destruction of Jerusalem, which were planted by their means and ministry; for nothing of this kind appears in the word of God: and much less after the second coming of Christ, shall faithful ministers of the word have power over so many cities, literally taken; for both in the kingdom-state and in the ultimate glory, there will be but one beloved city, *the holy city, the new Jerusalem*: nor is any thing in particular, in a metaphorical sense, intended; only in general, that the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of it, will be given unto them; and they shall reign

with Christ on earth a thousand years; and shall also have a crown of glory, life, and righteousness bestowed on them, and shall sit on the throne with Christ; and besides all this, the persons they have been instrumental to convert, will be their joy, and crown of rejoicing. A learned (1) writer explains these ten cities, by the ten horns of the dragon and beast, in *Rev. xii. 3.* and chap. *xiii. 1.* by which are meant ten kings, or kingdoms, *Rev. xvii. 12.* *Dan. vii. 24.* These indeed will be overcome by Christ, and they that are with him, and will hate the Romish antichrist, and destroy him; so that it seems, there will be revolutions in these kingdoms; and large conversions to the faith of Christ, which seems to be what this writer means by authority over them.

18 And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

He who was next, though less useful, yet equally diligent and active:

Saying, Lord] Acknowledging also the power and authority of Christ over him:

Thy pound hath gained five pounds] Is increased fivefold, or is turned to a fivefold account, to the interest of Christ, and good of immortal souls. The usefulness of the ministers of the Gospel is not always alike; as they have gifts different one from another, so their improvements are different, and their labours, though faithful, do not always turn to the same account.

19 And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.

He commended him as a good and faithful servant, though this is not expressed; and added,

Be thou also over five cities] Which does not denote any inequality of glory in Christ's ministers, who will all *shine as the firmament; and as the stars forever and ever*; at least, there will be no inequality in the ultimate state of happiness, when all the saints shall *shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father*, whatever there may be in the kingdom-state, or in Christ's personal reign with his saints on earth. The above learned writer would have this passage compared with *Isai. xix. 18.*

20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

Another, who was one of the servants; had a gift, but did not use and improve it, nor did it turn to any account:

Saying,

(1) Teellmanni Specimen Explin. Parabol. 21. 23.

Saying, Lord] Owning also the lordship and dominion of Christ, as all will confess at the last day, even those who have no interest in him, and cannot call him *their* Lord:

Behold, here is thy pound] He owns his gifts were the Lord's, and that he had received them from him, and now returns them:

Which I have kept] He had kept that which was committed to him, and that even till his Lord came; he had not lost it, though it was not increased, or was of any advantage to Christ, or the souls of men, it being neglected by him; for it was

Laid up in a napkin] The Greek word, here used for a napkin, is adopted by the Jews into their language, and is used for a veil, and for a linen cloth: this puts me in mind of what the Jews call, קני סודר "possession by a napkin," or linen cloth; their custom is this; when they buy, or sell any thing, to use a piece of cloth they call *sudar*, the word in the text, which the contractors lay hold upon, whereby they ratify and confirm the bargain (*m*): but this man made no use of his *sudar*, or napkin, in buying and selling; he traded not at all; he wrapped up his money in it, and both lay useless; his gift lay dormant and unexercised, which was given him to profit withal.

21 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

I feared, not with a right fear, with a fear of his goodness, who had bestowed such an excellent gift on him; for this would have taught him to have departed from evil, and have put him on doing his master's will, and making use of his gift to his glory: his fear was not of the right kind, and was ill-grounded, as appears by what follows:

Because thou art an austere man] Cruel and uncompassionate to his servants, and hard to be pleased: than which nothing is more false, since it is evident, that Christ is compassionate both to the bodies and souls of men; is a merciful high priest, and is one that has compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way, and cannot but be touched with the feeling of his peoples infirmities; and is mild and gentle in his whole deportment, and in all his administrations:

Thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow] Suggesting, that he was covetous of that which did not belong to him, and withheld what was due to his servants, and rigorously exacted service that could not be performed: a most iniquitous charge, since none so liberal as he, giving gifts, grace and glory, freely; imposing no grievous commands on men; *his yoke being*

easy, and his burden light; never sending a man to a warfare at his own charge; but always giving grace and strength proportionable to the service he calls to, and rewarding his servants in a most bountiful manner, infinitely beyond their deserts.

22 And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou wicked servant*. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:

He saith, by way of reply to his vile slander, and unrighteous charge;

Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant] As he might be justly called: he was not only a wicked man, as all men are, even enemies by wicked works, and lie in wickedness; and a wicked professor of religion, as there be some; but a wicked minister, and that not on account of his bad principles, and sinful life and conversation, but for his sloth and negligence, and the wrong thoughts he entertained of; and the false charges he brought against Christ; and Christ turns his own argument upon him, and by his own words condemns him:

Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow] Not allowing this, but supposing it was as he said; then Christ argues as follows, for his conviction;

23 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

Or "on the table," at which the bankers sat, and received and delivered money on interest. The Complutensian edition reads, "to the tables, or bankers:" had Christ been such a person as he represents him, he ought to have been the more diligent, and made the greater use of his gifts, since he knew that he would, in a rigid manner, as he suggests, demand an account of them:

That at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? Not that Christ approves of usury in an unlawful way, by extortion; but reproves hereby the sloth of this man, and exposes his folly and wickedness upon his own principles.

24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds.

He said to the angels, it may be; though this may not be strictly taken, as if any persons, angels, or men, will be employed in what follows, only that it will be done, or may be expected:

Take from him the pound] Which shews that it was not special grace, for that is a good part that

(m) Elias in Tishbi in voce תִּשְׁבִּי.

shall never be taken away; but gifts, which may be taken away from men, or they from them:

And give it to him that hath ten pounds] Not that, strictly speaking, the gifts of some men are taken from them and bestowed on others; but the design of the expression is to shew, that to diligent and laborious ministers, there is an increase of gifts; their knowledge enlarges, and their light shines more and more unto the perfect day, and they become more useful; and appear brighter and more illustrious, through the sloth of others, or when compared with indolent, negligent, and useless ministers.

25 (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

The bystanders said,

Lord, he hath ten pounds] Which they said either through envy at his superior gifts and usefulness; for it is generally the lot of the most eminent and useful servants of Christ to be envied by others; or in surprise, as wondering at the conduct of Christ in giving more to such, who had so much already. The Ethiopic version reads the words by way of interrogation, "Hath he not ten pounds?" is not that enough? why should he have more? This verse is left out in Beza's most ancient copy. However, it is rightly put into a parenthesis in our version; for the following version is strictly connected with *χ. 24.* and contains a reason of what is there ordered.

26 For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath, shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

And what I say may be depended on as truth, and what will be found matter of fact:

That unto every one that hath, shall be given] Greater and larger gifts, fitting him for greater usefulness: he that has gifts, and makes use of them, increases in them; they enlarge with their use, and become brighter, and he more useful. The Vulgate Latin version adds, "and he shall abound, or shall have abundance;" as in *Matt. xxv. 29.*

And from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him] That is, that which he seemed to have, or thought he had, as in chapter viii. 18. for from him that has really nothing, nothing can be taken away: though the sense may be, that he that does not use the talent, or exercise the gift bestowed on him, but lays it up in a napkin, which is all one as if he had it not, even the gift itself shall be taken away from him; and as others receive no benefit by it, he shall receive

no honour from it; see the notes on *Matt. xiii. 12.* and *xxv. 29.*

27 But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

Mine enemies, meaning particularly the Jews, who were enemies to the person of Christ, and hated and rejected him, as the king Messiah; and rebelled against him, and would not submit to his government; and were enemies to his people, and were exceeding mad against them, and persecuted them; and to his Gospel, and the distinguishing truths of it; and to his ordinances, which they rejected against themselves:

Which would not that I should reign over them] See *χ. 14.*

Bring hither, and slay them before me] Which had its accomplishment in the destruction of Jerusalem, when multitudes of them were slain with the sword, both with their own, and with that of their enemies; and to this the parable has a special respect, and of which Christ more largely discourses in this chapter; see *χ. 41—44.* Though it is true of all natural men, that they are enemies to Christ; and so of all negligent and slothful professors, and ministers of the word, who, when Christ shall come a second time, of which his coming to destroy the Jewish nation was an emblem and pledge, will be punished with everlasting destruction by him; and then all other enemies will be slain and destroyed, sin, Satan, the world, and death: of the first of these the Jews say (*n*), "In the time to come the holy, blessed God, will bring forth the evil imagination (or corruption of nature), *וְיָבִיט* "and slay it before the righteous and the wicked."

28 ¶ And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem.

When he had delivered the above parable, in order to remove the prejudices of his disciples and the multitude, concerning a temporal kingdom, and to give them true notions of his own kingdom, and the case of the Jewish nation:

He went before] His disciples: he was the foremost of them in the journey; he proceeded at the head of them, with great cheerfulness and eagerness:

Ascending up to Jerusalem] Through the lower lands of Judea, to the city of Jerusalem, which was built on higher ground; where he was to eat his last passover, and suffer, and die, in the room and stead of his people; and this shews how willing

(n) T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 1.

ing and greatly desirous he was to finish the work of redemption he came about.

29 And it came to pass, when he was come night to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called *the mount of Olives*, he sent two of his disciples,

The other Evangelists, Matthew and Mark, add unto Jerusalem; but this Luke designs afterwards, *§. 37.* and therefore here means, as is expressed, that he was come nigh

To Bethphage and Bethany] Two tracts of land which reached from mount Olivet to Jerusalem; so that when he was there, he was nigh unto the city.

At the mount, called *the mount of Olives*] Or *Elaion*, as the Ethiopic version, which retains the Greek word for it; and which has its name from the great number of olive-trees that grew upon it.

He sent two of his disciples] Their names are not mentioned by any of the Evangelists, but it is very probable they were Peter and John. Of the places here mentioned, see the note on *Matt. xxi. 1.*

30 Saying, Go ye into the village over against you; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither.

What village this was, is not said by any of the Evangelists; it seems to be either Bethany, or Nob; and rather the latter, since the village of Bethany was fifteen furlongs, or near two miles from Jerusalem, *John xi. 18.* and therefore must have been passed by Christ; whereas the tract called Bethany, at the mount of Olives, where Christ now was, was but a sabbath-day's journey, or about a mile, *Luke xxiv. 50.* compared with *Acts i. 12.* see the note on *Matt. xxi. 2.*

In the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied] In Matthew it is said, an ass, and a colt with her; which agrees with the prophecy in *Zach. ix. 9.* and which, no doubt, was matter of fact: nor does Mark and Luke contradict it, though they do not express it.

Whereon yet never man sat; loose him, and bring him hither] For it seems that Christ staid at the above place, until the disciples went and fetched it.

31 And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him.

As our Lord, being God omniscient, knew this question, *Why do ye loose him?* would be asked by the owners, therefore he prepares his disciples with an answer to it; namely,

Thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath

need of him] The Syriac and Perfic versions read *our Lord, yours, and ours*; probably the owners of the colt might be such as knew the Lord Jesus Christ, and by this way of speaking of him, knew at once who was meant, and so made no scruple of sending him, as Christ told them he would not; and so they found it; see the notes on *Matt. xxi. 3.* and *Mark xi. 3.*

32 And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them.

The two disciples that were sent by Christ, were obedient to him, and went their way, as he directed them, and did as he ordered them;

And found even as he had said unto them] The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, and so some copies add, "the colt standing;" that is, in the place and manner which he had described to them; see the note on *Mark xi. 4.*

33 And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt?

Loosing it in order to bring it away, as Christ bid them:

The owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt? Mark takes notice of this, but does not tell us who they were, only that they were persons that stood there; but this Evangelist informs us who they were: and it seems by this, that there were more owners of the colt than one, which might have made the taking away of the colt the more difficult; since, though one might agree to it, another might not; but Christ, who is God, and has the hearts of all men in his hands, could, as he did, dispose the minds of these men to let the colt go freely and quietly with his disciples; see the note on *Mark xi. 5.*

34 And they said, The Lord hath need of him.

Or, *our Lord*, as the above versions in *§. 31.* They used the words Christ directed them to use, and it had the effect he said it would; for the owners both let them go, and the colt with them, directly; see the note on *Matthew xxi. 6.* and *Mark xi. 6.*

35 And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon.

They brought the colt:

And they cast their garments upon the colt] That is, the disciples did so, who brought him to Jesus; the Perfic version here, as in *Matt. xxi. 7.* renders

it very wrongly, "Jesus put his own garment on its back, and sat on it;" it follows,

And they set Jesus thereon.] In order to ride upon him, as he did, to Jerusalem.

36 And as they went, they spread their clothes in the way.

He went riding on the colt towards Jerusalem:

They spread their clothes in the way.] Not the disciples, for they had put their garments upon the colt; but the multitude, which either came with him from Jericho, and other parts, or that met him from Jerusalem, or both; see *Matt. xxi. 8.* and *Mark xi. 8.* and so the Persic version here; "men put off their clothes and cast them in the way, that he might pass over them;" see the note on *Matt. xxi. 8.*

37 And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen;

Was come nigh to the city of Jerusalem, and which was then in sight.

Even now at the descent of the mount of Olives.] Being come to the foot of that mount, which lay to the east of Jerusalem, and was about five furlongs from it, or a little more than half a mile (d):

The whole multitude of the disciples.] Not only the twelve, but the large company that followed Christ out of Galilee, and were joined by more in Judea, as they came along, some going before him, and others behind him. The Arabic and Persic versions divide these words, and read, "the multitude, and the disciples;" not only the apostles, but the whole body of the people that were with Christ:

Began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen.] Calling to mind the many miracles he had wrought in Galilee, at Cana, Capernaum, and other places, and now, as he passed through Judea, particularly about Jericho, where he had restored sight to two or three blind men; and especially the miracle he had lately wrought at Bethany, in raising Lazarus from the dead; from all which they might strongly conclude, that he must be the Messiah; and being filled with joy and gladness, at the remembrance of these things, and with thankfulness to God, that he had raised up this glorious Saviour and Redeemer, they lifted up their voices together, and exerted them to the uttermost, and made the air ring with their shouts, and acclamations of praise to God, on this occasion.

(c) *Joseph. Antiq. l. 20. c. 6.*

38 Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

Blessed be the King Messiah, the King of Israel, the Son of David, the Christ of God; so the Ethiopic version adds, "Blessed be the King of Israel;" they sung their hosannas to him, as the other Evangelists say,

That cometh in the name of the Lord.] See the note on *Matt. xxi. 9.*

Peace in heaven.] All heavenly peace and prosperity attend him; or let peace be made with God in heaven, by the Prince of peace on earth, for sinful men:

And glory in the highest.] Glory be given to God for peace, life, and salvation by his Son; and that in the highest heavens, by the angels there, as well as by men on earth, and in the highest notes and strains.

39 And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.

Some of the Pharisees, who had placed themselves there, to watch and observe what was said and done, that they might have something to reproach Christ with, expose him for, or bring as a charge against him:

Said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.] Not being able to bear such high encomiums of Jesus, and such open and public declarations of his being the Messiah; and would insinuate, that it was blasphemy in them to say what they did, and pride and vanity in him to allow of it; and that the consequence might be sedition and tumult: and therefore it became him to check such a disorderly, noisy, evil, and dangerous practice.

40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

He said, I tell you as a truth, which may be depended on, and you may be assured of; this he spake with great earnestness, fervour, and courage:

That if these should hold their peace.] Be silent, and not sing the praises of God, and ascribe glory to him, and profess the Messiah, and make this public acknowledgement of him:

The stones would immediately cry out.] Either against them, or in a declaration of the Messiah. By which expression our Lord means, that it was impossible it should be otherwise; it would be intolerable if it was not; and rather than it should not be, God, who is able out of stones to raise up children to Abraham, would make the stones speak, or

or turn stones into men, who should rise up and praise the Lord, and confess the Messiah: hereby commending his disciples, and tacitly reflecting upon the Pharisees for their stupidity; and also giving a hint of the conversion of the Gentiles, who might be compared to *stones*, especially in the opinion of the Jews.

41 ¶ And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,

He beheld the city of Jerusalem; being now nearer, and in a situation to take a full view of it, he lift up his eyes, and looked wistfully on it, and beholding the grandeur and magnificence of it, the number of the houses, and the stately structures in it, and knowing what calamities in a few years would come upon it; with which being affected, as man, he looked upon it,

And wept over it] Touched with a tender concern for it, his natural passions moved, and tears fell plentifully from his eyes. This must be understood of Christ merely as man, and is a proof of the truth of his human nature, which had all the natural properties, and even the infirmities of it; and as affected with the temporal ruin of Jerusalem, and as concerned for its temporal welfare; and is not to be improved either against his proper Deity, or the doctrines of distinguishing grace, relating to the spiritual and eternal salvation of God's elect; things that are foreign from the sense of this passage. Some ancient christians, and orthodox too, thinking that this was not so agreeable to Christ, but reflected some weakness and dishonour upon him, expunged this clause concerning his weeping; but we have another instance besides this; see *John xi. 35.* and even the Jews themselves cannot think this to be unsuitable to the Messiah, when they represent the Shekinah, and God himself, weeping over the destruction of the temple (*p*); and it is particularly (*q*) said by them of the Messiah, that he shall weep over the wicked among the Jews, according to *Isaiab liii. 5.* and they encourage persons to mourn over Jerusalem: they say (*r*), "Whoever does any business on the ninth of *Ab*, (the day that city was destroyed) and does not mourn over Jerusalem, shall not see its joy; but whoever does mourn over it, shall see its joy;" according to *Isaiab lxvi. 10* (*s*).

42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things *which belong* unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

Even thou, as well as other cities; or who hast been so long a flourishing city, the metropolis of the nation, the seat of the ancient kings of Judah; yea, the city of the great God, the place of divine worship, whither the tribes came up, time after time, to serve the Lord; a city so highly honoured of God and man: or, who hast despised the messages of the servants of God, mocked and misused the prophets in time past, beat one, killed another, and stoned another: if such a city, after all this, had but known its true interest,

At least in this thy day] The day of thy visitation, the last day thou art to have, though it is so late:

The things which belong unto thy peace] Meaning, not peace with God, and the things belonging or conducing to that, which are not mens works of righteousness, nor tears of repentance, nor even faith itself; but the obedience and righteousness, the blood, sacrifice, and death of Christ: nor spiritual peace, or internal peace of conscience, which comes in a Gospel-way, through believing, in a course of obedience, and all from Christ, the peace-maker, and peace-giver: nor eternal peace hereafter, which the grace of God gives a meetness for, and the righteousness of Christ a right unto: the knowledge of all which is not natural to men, or to be obtained of themselves, but is the gift of God's grace, and the operation of his Spirit. But supposing such a peace, and such things relating to it, were intended, nothing more can be inferred from hence, than that if the Jews had known these things, they had been happy; and since they had the means of knowing them, they were, of all men, inexcusable; and that Christ, as man, and one of their nation, and as a minister of the circumcision, had a passionate concern for their welfare: but not that these Jews, or any men, can of themselves, and without the unfrustrable grace of God working upon their hearts, and enlightening their understanding, know these things; or that Christ acted any insincere part in wishing for these things for them, as man, and a minister of the word, when he knew, as God, it was not consistent with the will of God that they should have them: since Christ, as man, sometimes earnestly prayed for that, which he, as God, knew could not be, as in the case of his own sufferings and death. Nor is this irreconcilable to his dying intentionally only for those who are actually saved: but after all, these words are only spoken of Jerusalem, and the inhabitants of that city, and not of all mankind; and regard only their temporal peace and welfare, whose destruction Christ knew was near at hand; and of which he afterwards speaks in the following verses;

Eut

(p) Zohar in Gen. fol. 174. 4. & in Exod. fol. 76. 4. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 3. 2. Präfat. Echa Rabbati, fol. 39. 4.

(q) Zohar in Exod. fol. 85. 2. (r) T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 30. 2. (s) T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 60. 2. & Caphtor, fol. 118. 2.

But now they are hid from thine eyes] Their eyes were blinded; they were given up to a judicial blindness, and hardness of heart; a spirit of slumber and stupidity had seized them; they could not discern the signs of the times, and so disbelieved Jesus as the Messiah, and rejected him as such; whom, had they received only in a notional way, though they had not believed in him spiritually, to the saving of their souls, they would have been secured from outward calamities, and would have enjoyed peace and prosperity, and the things belonging to it, our Lord speaks of. Christ alludes to the name of Jerusalem, which signifies the *vision of peace*, or they shall *see peace*; but her name and case now did not agree. His wish is the same the Psalmist encourages in *Psalms* cxxii. 6. which in the Septuagint version, is rendered, "Pray for the things that belong to the peace of Jerusalem."

43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side.

Shall come suddenly, and very quickly, as they did within forty years after this:

That thine enemies] The Romans, and such the Jews took them to be, and might easily understand who our Lord meant.

Shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side] Which was not only verified in the Roman armies closely besieging them; but particularly in this, as Josephus relates (1), that Titus built a wall about the city, of thirty-nine furlongs long, and thirteen forts in it, which reached ten furlongs, and all done in three days time; by which means they were pent up, starved, and famished, and reduced to inexpressible distress.

44 And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

Shall bear down all the houses in it, the stately edifices, and even the temple itself; see the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 2.

And thy children within thee] That is, the inhabitants of the place should be slain with the sword of the enemy, and so fall to the ground, and lie upon it:

And they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another] Such a consummate, and entire desolation

shall be made, as was foretold by Daniel, chapter ix. 27.

Because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation] In which the day-spring from on high had visited them with his personal presence, preaching among them, and working miracles; and yet they knew him not, but despised and rejected him: yea, after that they had put him to death, and he was risen again, he ordered his disciples to begin their ministry, and preach the Gospel first at Jerusalem; and they continued for some time only preaching to them, or at least rarely elsewhere, till they put away the Gospel from them. The time of the ministry of John the Baptist, of Christ and his apostles in Judea, was the time of Jerusalem's visitation in a way of mercy; which not being taken notice of and observed, brought another kind of visitation upon them, even in a way of wrath and vengeance. The Jews pretend to assign other causes of Jerusalem's destruction; but the true cause was their rejection of Jesus, as the Messiah; as profaning the sabbath; not reading the *Shema*, or *Hear, O Israel*; not putting children to school; want of shame; putting small and great upon a level; not reproving one another, and despising the disciples of the wise men (2). Thus they shifted off the true cause of their ruin, and ascribed it to other things.

45 ¶ And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought:

Being come into the city, he alighted from the colt he rode on, and having committed it to the care of a proper person to return it to the owner, he went up directly to the temple, of which he was the lord and proprietor, and where he had some work to do the few days he had to live.

And began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought] That traded in sheep, and oxen, and doves; see *John* ii. 15. and *Matt.* xxi. 12. The Ethiopic version adds here, as there, *and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves.*

46 Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves.

Written in *Isaiah* lvi. 7.

My house is the house of prayer] Built and devoted for that service:

But ye have made it a den of thieves] Which clause is not written in the above prophecy, but are the words of Christ referring to *Jer.* vii. 11. The

(1) De Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 8.

(2) T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 119. 2.

The Ethiopic version adds, "and robbers;" and the Perfic version adds, "and a place of cut-purses;" see the note on *Matt.* xxi. 13.

47 ¶ And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him,

He taught every day, till the passover came; and only in the day; for at night he went out of the city to Bethany, or to the mount of Olives: some of his discourses in the temple, the parables he delivered, and his disputations with the doctors, are recorded in *Matt.* xxi. 23. to the end of the xxiid chapter, and in *Mark* xi. 27. to the end of the xiiid chapter:

But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people] Or, "the elders of the people," as the Syriac version renders it; that is, the whole sanhedrim,

Sought to destroy him] Met and consulted together, how to get him into their hands; and what charges to bring against him; in order to put him to death.

48 And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him.

Could not find, &c.] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, and so Beza's most ancient copy; add, *to him*; they could not find an opportunity of seizing him, nor any advantage against him; they knew not what steps to take; nor how to bring about their wicked design of destroying him.

For all the people were very attentive to hear him] There were great crowds always about him, that hung upon him; as the word rendered *attentive* signifies; they heard him with great eagerness and diligence, and were ready to catch every word that dropped from his lips; and were exceedingly taken with him; having never heard any man speak like him: wherefore having so many followers, and being so high in the opinion and affection of the people, the sanhedrim were at a loss what method to make use of to gain their point; and they feared the people, should they seize him publicly, lest they should rise and rescue him, and cause a tumult and disturbance.

C H A P. XX.

In this chapter the Pharisees ask Christ by what authority he doth these things; which he answers by another question concerning the baptism of John, *ſ. 1—8.* He threateneth them with heavy judgments, by a parable of a vineyard, *ſ. 9—19.* Answers to the question proposed to him concerning the lawfulness of paying tribute to Cæsar; *ſ. 20—26.*

VOL. II.

Vindicates the doctrine of the resurrection, and proves it out of the law of Moses, ſ. 27—40. He answereth whether Christ be the Son of David, ſ. 41—44. and deborteth from ambition and hypocrisy, ſ. 45—47.

1 AND it came to pass, *that* on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the Gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him with the elders,

According to the account of the Evangelist Mark, it must be the second day, or two days after his public entrance into Jerusalem; for on the evening of the day he made his entry, he went out to Bethany with his disciples; the next morning, as he returned from thence, he cursed the barren fig-tree; and when he came to the temple, cast out the buyers and sellers; at evening he went out again, either to Bethany, or the mount of Olives; and the next morning, as he and his disciples returned, the fig-tree was observed to be dried up; and when they were come to Jerusalem, as he was walking in the temple, he was attacked by the sanhedrim; and had the following discourse with them:

As he taught the people in the temple, and preached the Gospel] For he taught them by preaching that, and which he did most clearly, faithfully, and publicly, being abundantly anointed and qualified for it, and sent to do it.

The chief priests and the scribes came upon him, with the elders] The whole sanhedrim being purposely convened together, came upon him in a body; and it may be suddenly; and at an unawares, and came open-mouthed against him, and attacked him with great warmth and vehemency.

2 And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?

The Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, *this thing*; as if the sanhedrim only referred to his preaching the Gospel, which is mentioned in the preceding verse; and was what he was about when they came to him: but the Perfic version reads, "all these things;" not only preaching, but working miracles; and particularly driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple, which especially affected them, they losing their rents thereby:

Or who is he that gave thee this authority?] God or man? See the note on *Matt.* xxi. 23.

3 And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me:

M m

That

That is, *Jesus* replied to them, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac and Perfic versions express it :

I will also ask you one thing; and answer me] When he also promised, that if they would give him an answer to his question, he would satisfy them in the point they interrogated him about : and as this was a prudent decline to avoid the snare they laid for him, so it was not an impertinent reply to them; since it led on to a proper answer to their question, as appears by the case proposed; see the note on *Matt.* xxi. 24.

4 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

This was a new ordinance, and John must have his authority for administering it either from God, or from men; and Christ is desirous to know from which he derived it, in their opinion; suggesting, that by the same authority John, his forerunner, came baptizing, he himself came preaching and working miracles; see the note on *Matt.* xxi. 25.

5 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not?

They reasoned, or, "thought with themselves," as the Syriac version; or, "within themselves," as the Vulgate Latin, though they did not express it; or, "one with another," as the Arabic version; they took counsel together, and debated the matter among themselves, and reasoned after this manner :

Saying, If we shall say, from heaven] Which was what, in their own consciences, they believed to be true :

He will say, Why then believed ye him not?] In what he said concerning the Messiah; which if they had, as they should, there would have been no reason for such a question they had put; see the note, as above.

6 But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet.

If we say, of men] Which they had a good will to, against the dictates of their own consciences :

All the people will stone us] Meaning the common people, that were then in the temple about Christ, hearing him preach; who would be so enraged at such an answer, that, without any regard to their character and office, they would rise and stone them. The Ethiopic version adds, "whom we fear;" see *Matt.* xxi. 26. for it seems that they had not so behaved as to have the goodwill and esteem of the people, at least they did not pin their faith on their sleeve :

For they be persuaded that John was a prophet] They were fully assured of it; and the sentiments and authority of the chief priests could have no weight and influence upon them to weaken their faith in this point; the evidence was so strong, and their faith so firm and sure.

7 And they answered, that they could not tell whence it was.

Whether from heaven, or of men; in this, no doubt, they told an untruth: but they chose rather to sacrifice their consciences than their interest; and pretend ignorance rather than profess the truth; when they saw they should be put to confusion, or be exposed to the resentment of the people.

8 And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

Jesus said, since they would not give him a direct answer to his question :

Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things] Nor was there any need of it; they might easily perceive by what he had said, from whence he professed to have received his authority; from God, and not from men; see the note on *Matt.* xxi. 27.

9 ¶ Then began he to speak to the people this parable; A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time.

According to the other Evangelists, this parable seems to be spoken to the chief priests, scribes, and elders; and certain it is, that they looked upon themselves as struck at in it; it might be spoken to both. Christ having silenced the sanhedrim, turned himself to the people, and delivered the parable of the vineyard to them, though his principal view was to the priests :

A certain man planted a vineyard] The people of the Jews are designed by the *vineyard*, and the *certain man*, or *householder*, as Matthew calls him, is the Lord of hosts; and the planting of it is to be understood of his bringing and settling the people of Israel in the land of Canaan. Luke omits certain things which the other Evangelists relate, as setting an hedge about it; digging a wine-press, and building a tower in it; and the Perfic version here adds, "and planted trees, and set a wall about it;" all which express the care that was taken to cultivate and protect it; and signify the various blessings and privileges the Jews enjoyed under the former dispensation; see the notes on *Matt.* xxii. 33. and *Mark* xii. 1.

And let it forth to husbandmen] Put the people of the Jews under the care not only of civil magistrates,

rates, but of ecclesiastical governors, who were to dress this vine, or instruct these people in matters of religion, that they might be fruitful in good works:

And went into a far country for a long time] For a long time it was, from the times of Moles and Joshua, when the first settlement, both of the civil and ecclesiastical state of the Jews was made, to the times of Christ; it was fourteen or fifteen hundred years; see the notes, as above.

10 And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty.

At the season, &c.] Or, "when it was the time of fruit," as the Ethiopic version renders it, agreeable to *Matthew* xxi. 34. see the note there:

He sent a servant to the husbandmen] Or *servants*, as in *Matthew*; the prophets of the Lord, his messengers, whom he sent to them, to exhort them to bring forth the fruits of righteousness, as follows:

That they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard] That is, that they, bringing forth good fruit in their lives and conversations, whereby it might appear that they were trees of righteousness, and the planting of the Lord; he, or they observing them, might give an account of them to the Lord, to the glory of his name:

But the husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty] The Jews not only mocked these messengers of the Lord, and despised their words, but misused them, *2 Chron.* xxxvi. 15. they beat them with their fists, smote them on the cheek, and scourged them with scourges; so that they had no account to give of their fruitfulness in good works, but the contrary; see the notes on *Matt.* xxi. 35. and *Mark* xii. 3.

11 And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated him shamefully, and sent him away empty.

Or he sent another, or sett of prophets in after-times, and yet before the Babylonish captivity:

And they beat him also] As they had done the other; they continued in their mal-practices, yea, increased in them:

And entreated him shamefully] Putting him to open shame, using him in a very ignominious and shameful manner; which it was a shame to relate, and which was shameful for them to do:

And sent him away empty] As they had done the other.

12 And again, he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast him out.

Perhaps those sent after the return of the Jews from captivity, and between that time and the coming of Christ, in which interval many good men were used in a very inhuman manner, *Heb.* xi. 37, 38.

And they wounded him also] By casting stones at him; see *Mark* xii. 4.

And cast him out] Of the vineyard.

13 Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him when they see him.

The lord, he who planted it, and let it out to husbandmen, and expected fruit from it, and sent his servants from time to time for it:

What shall I do?] Or what can be done more than has been done? *Isaiah* v. 4. Who else can be sent that is likely to do any good with such an ungrateful and unfruitful people?

I will send my beloved son] The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who lay in his bosom; was the darling of his soul, and the delight of his heart; him he determined to send, and him he did send to the lost sheep of the house of Israel:

It may be they will reverence him when they see him] It might be thought, after the manner of men, that considering the greatness of his person, as the Son of God; the nature of his office, as the Redeemer and Saviour of men; the doctrines which he preached, the miracles which he wrought, and the holiness and harmlessness of his conversation, and the great good he did both to the bodies and souls of men; that he would have been had in great esteem and veneration with the men to whom he was sent, and among whom he conversed; but, alas! when they saw him, they saw no beauty, comeliness, or excellency in him; and nothing on account of which he should be desired by them.

14 But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.

When they saw him in human nature, heard him preach, and observed the miracles done by him:

They reasoned among themselves] As the scribes and Pharisees, and elders of the people often did:

Saying, This is the heir] The heir of God, being his Son; and so the Ethiopic version; "this Son is his heir," or the heir of the vineyard; being, by appointment, heir of all things, and, by his descent from David, heir to the kingdom of Israel:

Come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours] The Arabic and Persic versions render it,

"and his inheritance shall be ours;" the nation, city, temple, and all the emoluments and benefits thereof. The word *come* is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Gothic and Vulgate Latin versions.

15 So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?

They rejected him as the Messiah, and even denied that he was of the Jewish nation; said he was a Samaritan; and delivered him to the Gentiles that were without, and were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel; and at last had him without their city, and put him to death, as follows:

And killed him] The Prince of life, the Lord of glory, and Heir of all things; see *Acts* ii. 23, 36. and chapter iii. 15. and v. 30. and x. 39.

What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?] The husbandmen, the chief priests, elders, scribes, and Pharisees; at whose solicitations the life of his Son, and heir, was taken away; by which he must be greatly provoked and incensed.

16 He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid.

Which had its accomplishment at the destruction of Jerusalem: according to the other Evangelists, these words are the answer of the chief priests, scribes, and elders, to the above questions put to them by Christ, after he had delivered the parable; but here they seem to be the words of Christ, who also said the same, and confirmed what they had observed; and could not but own that it was just and right, and what might be expected, with what follows.

And shall give the vineyard to others] The land of Judea, to the Romans in particular; and the church-state, with the Gospel and ordinances of it, to the Gentiles in general, sometimes called *others*; see the notes on chap. v. 29. and xviii. 11.

And when they heard it, they said, God forbid] For though these were their own words, yet being repeated and confirmed by Christ, and perceiving that they were the persons intended, they deprecate the fulfilment of them; at least so far as they understood they related to the killing of the Messiah, and to the destruction of their nation, city, and temple.

17 And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?

He looked very earnestly and wistfully at them; speaking as it were by his looks, signifying, that verily so it would be, as he had said; that they would reject the Messiah, and put him to death, and bring utter ruin upon themselves, and deprive their posterity of many advantages and privileges:

And said, What is this then that is written?] That is, what else is the meaning of such a scripture? is not the sense of that perfectly agreeable to what has been said, that the Messiah shall be rejected by the principal men among the Jews in church and state; and yet he shall be exalted, who will then take vengeance on them?

The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?] The passage is in *Psalms* cxviii. 22. see the note on *Matt.* xxi. 42.

18 Whosoever shall fall upon that stone, shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

Meaning, not who shall fall upon Christ by faith, and build upon him as the foundation-stone, for such shall be saved; but that stumble at him, and are offended with him, and fall by unbelief and hardness of heart; such do themselves much hurt and mischief, and expose themselves to danger and ruin; they bid very fair for destruction:

But on whomsoever it shall fall] As it did with its full weight upon the Jews at their destruction, and as it will upon all christless sinners at the last day:

It will grind him to powder] The ruin of such will be unavoidable, and there will be no recovery; see the note on *Matt.* xxi. 44.

19 ¶ And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.

They, as soon as he had delivered the above parable, together with that of the two sons,

Sought to lay hands on him] They had a goodwill to it, being exceedingly grieved with the question he put to them concerning John's baptism, which confounded them, and put them to silence; and with the parables he delivered, in which they were so manifestly pointed at:

And they feared the people] Lest they should rise and stone them, as in *x. 6.* or rescue him out of their hands;

For they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them] And that they were the husbandmen that had used the servants of God so ill, and would put to death the Son of God, the Messiah; and who would at length be destroyed themselves, and the

the kingdom of God be taken from them; though they seem to detest and deprecate it, saying in *Y.* 16. *God forbid*; that we should kill the heir, or that we should be destroyed, and the vineyard given to others: these things grievously nettled them, and exasperated them against him; but they knew not how to help themselves at present.

20 And they watched *him*, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.

They watched what he said, and what he did, and where he went, that they might take an advantage against him, or know where he was, to send to him, as they should think fit, and take the best opportunity of so doing. The Syriac and Persic versions leave out this clause:

And sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men] Men of virtue and religion, conscientious men, that would do nothing but what was just and right, and were desirous of being exactly informed of the truth of things, that they might act right in every punctilio:

That they might take hold of his words] Improve them, and form a charge upon them, of sedition and treason:

That so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor] The Roman governor, and by him be put to death: These men were some of them the disciples of the Pharisees, and others were Herodians; see *Matt.* xxii. 16.

21 And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly:

Saying, Rabbi, or doctor; hoping, by this flattering title, and the flattering words used by them, to work him to an openness and freedom of conversation with them:

We know that thou sayest and teachest rightly] Rightly dividest the word of God, and deliverest out sound doctrine according to it: and this he certainly did, though they spoke these words hypocritically, not believing what they themselves said; at least, they did not care that others should believe this of him:

Neither acceptest thou the person of any] The Persic version very wrongly renders it, "and look-
"est not upon the countenance, and heart of any
"one whomsoever;" for though Christ did not look upon the countenances of men, and judge according to the outward appearance, nor regard

men on account of outward circumstances, as riches, honours, learning, &c. yet he looked upon the heart, and knew what was in it, and respected sincerity and uprightness wherever he found it, and which were wanting in these men:

But teachest the way of God truly] The way of worshipping God, and of enjoying him, both in this world and in that to come; see the note on *Matt.* xxii. 16.

22 Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cæsar, or no?

The Syriac and Persic versions here, as in the other Evangelists, render it, *head-money*. The phrase, *for us*, is here added, and on it lies the emphasis and stress of the question; for the doubt pretended, was not whether it was lawful for the Romans to pay tribute to Cæsar, but whether it was lawful for them who were Jews, were Abraham's seed, and, as they boasted, were never in bondage, but were the Lord's free people, to pay tribute to an heathen emperor, or no?

23 But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?

He knowing what was in them, and being a discernor of the thoughts and intents of their hearts, clearly saw that their view was, either that they might have a charge against him to the Roman governor, should he declare against the payment of tribute; or that they might expose him to the people of the Jews, should he assert the lawfulness of it:

And said unto them, Why tempt ye me] With this ensnaring question?

24 Shew me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Cæsar's.

Or, a Roman *denarius*, whose value was sevenpence half-penny of our money. The Persic version adds, "they shewed it, he asked of them;" and the Ethiopic version, "and they brought it, and he said unto them," as follows;

Whose image and superscription hath it?] For the penny had an head upon it, with something written, as the name of the emperor, whose image it was, his titles, the date of the coin, or some motto on it:

They answered and said, Cæsar's] Very likely Tiberius Cæsar's, who was at that time emperor of Rome; see the notes on *Matt.* xxii. 20, 21.

25 And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's, and unto God the things which be God's.

The Arabic version renders it, "Give to the king what is the king's;" give the tribute that was

was due to him; since they were under his government, and were protected by him, and traded with his money; the currency of which among them was an acknowledgment of him as their sovereign:

And unto God the things which be God's] The things which relate to his worship, honour, interest and kingdom; see the note on *Matt. xxii. 21.*

26 And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.

Could not take hold, &c.] Which was what they wanted; that if he had dropped any seditious and treasonable expressions against the government, they might be witnesses against him; or if he had not vindicated the liberties of the people, and the rights of the Jewish nation, these might be exasperated against him, and leave him:

And they marvelled at his answer] Which was so formed, as to give them no handle against him either way:

And held their peace] They were silenced, and had nothing to say to him, nor against him, but left him, and went their way.

27 Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked him,

That is, they came to Jesus, as the Perfic version expresses it; and it was the same day, as Matthew says, on which the disciples of the Pharisees, and the Herodians, had been with him, putting the question about tribute to him:

Which deny that there is any resurrection] That is, of the dead; that there ever was any instance of it, or ever will be: this was the distinguishing tenet of that sect; see *Acts xxiii. 8.*

And they asked him] The following question, after they had put a case to him.

28 Saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

Wrote in *Deut. xxv. 5.* where the substance of what follows is contained, though not in express words:

If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother] The meaning of which is, that if a man died without issue, and left a wife behind him, his next brother if unmarried, was to marry his wife, and the first child born of her was to be reckoned the deceased's, and

to inherit his estate; see the note on *Matt. xxii. 24.*

29 There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children.

There was such a family in the place where these Sadducees dwelt; or, however, that were known by them; at least they supposed such a case, and it might be fact:

And the first took a wife, and died without children] Son or daughter, and so had none to keep up his name, and to possess his inheritance.

30 And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.

Took her, as he was obliged by the above law, *And he died childless]* As his eldest brother before him.

31 And the third took her: and in like manner the seven also. And they left no children, and died.

All by virtue of the same law:

And in like manner the seven also] The other four, one after another; when all the seven married her:

And they left no children, and died] Or they died, leaving no children behind them.

32 Last of all the woman died also.

Having had no children by either of her seven husbands.

33 Therefore in the resurrection, whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.

Therefore, at the time of the resurrection of the dead, in that state, supposing there will be such an one, which they denied;

Whose wife of them is she?] The wife of the first, or the last, or any of the intermediate ones?

For seven had her to wife] And she had no child by either of them; so that their claim seems to be alike. This they thought unanswerable, and sufficient to set aside the notion of a resurrection.

34 And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage:

Jesus said, after he had observed that their error arose from their ignorance of the scriptures, and the power of God:

The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage] That is, such who live in this world, in the present mortal and imperfect state, being mortal men, and die, and leave their estates and possessions; these marry, and have wives given them in

in marriage; and it is very right and fit that so it should be, in order to keep up a succession of men, and that they may have heirs to enjoy their substance when they are gone.

35 But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:

The world to come, eternal life and happiness; not by their own works and merits, but through the blood, sacrifice, and righteousness of the Messiah:

And the resurrection from the dead] That is, the first resurrection, the resurrection unto life, which only the dead in Christ will enjoy (a); otherwise all will be raised; but some to the resurrection of damnation:

These neither marry, nor are given in marriage] There will be no need of any such practice, for the reasons that follow.

36 Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

Therefore there will be no need of marrying to procreate children, to keep up a succession of men, any more than there is among the angels:

For they are equal unto the angels] In spirituality, purity and immortality (b); see the note on *Matt.* xxii. 30.

And are the children of God] As they are now by adopting grace; but, as yet, it does not appear as it will then, what they are, and will be:

Being the children of the resurrection] As Christ was declared to be the Son of God by his resurrection, so will they appear to be the children of God by their resurrection to eternal life; for though others will rise, yet not to everlasting life; and thus appearing to be children of God, they will also be heirs of God, and enjoy the inheritance, which they will always live to possess in their persons; and therefore the case being different with them from the children of the world, they will not marry, nor be given in marriage, as they are.

37 Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

(a) According to Kimchi on Ezek. xliii. 10. They that believe it, will be worthy of it, but they who believe it not, are not worthy of it. (b) R. Alsheth on Eccles. i. 12. They shall be pure, and like the angels.

Or that there will be a resurrection of the dead, this is a proof of it:

Even Moses shewed at the bush] When the Lord appeared to him out of it, and he saw it burning with fire, and not consumed; when the Lord called to him out of it by the following name, as he has recorded it in *Exodus* iii. 6. Hence it is said,

When he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob] For though the Lord called himself so, yet Moses likewise calls him by these names, when he gives an account of this affair, and when he went from him to the children of Israel; see the note on *Matt.* xxii. 32.

38 For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.

See the note on *Matthew* xxii. 32.

For all live unto him] The Perfic version reads, "all these live unto him;" namely, *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*; for though they are dead to men, they are not to God; their souls live with him, and their bodies will be raised by him: he reckons of them, as if they were now alive, for he quickens the dead, and calls things that are not, as though they were; and this is the case of all the saints that are dead, as well as of those patriarchs. The Ethiopic version reads, "all live with him;" as the souls of all departed saints do; the Arabic version reads, "all live in him;" so all do now, *Acts* xvii. 28.

39 Then certain of the scribes answering, said, Master, thou hast well said.

The scribes, who believed the doctrine of the resurrection, which the Sadducees denied, and so were pleased with our Lord's reasonings on this subject, answered,

Master, thou hast well said] Thou hast spoken in a beautiful manner, reasoned finely upon this head, and set this matter in a fair and clear light; see the note on *Mark* xii. 28.

40 And after that they durst not ask him any question at all.

Neither the Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, nor Herodians.

41 ¶ And he said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's son?

The Ethiopic version reads, "he said to the Pharisees;" and so it appears, that it was to them he spoke, from *Matt.* xxii. 41.

How say they?] The Syriac version reads, *How say the scribes?* as in *Mark* xii. 35. and the Perfic version, "How say the wise men," the doctors in Israel?

That

That Christ is David's son?] Than which nothing was more common among the Jews.

42 And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

In Psalm cx. 1.

The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand] Which words were delivered by David, as inspired by the Spirit of God; and contain a speech of God the Father to his Son Jesus Christ, upon his ascension to heaven, after his sufferings, death, and resurrection from the dead; when he was bid to sit down in human nature, at the right hand of God, in token of having done his work on earth to full satisfaction; and in the relation of which David calls Christ *his Lord*; and is the reason of their being mentioned.

43 Till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

Which words are a continuation of the citation out of the above Psalm; and for the application of these words, with the preceding, to the Messiah, see the note on *Matthew* xxii. 44.

44 David therefore calleth him Lord, how is he then his Son?

Or, *my Lord*, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read; or, *his Lord*, as the Arabic version. This is the inference from the words before cited, upon which the following question is asked,

How is he then his Son?] How can these things be reconciled? in what sense can he be both his Lord and Son? See the note on *Matt.* xxii. 45.

45 ¶ Then in the audience of all the people he said unto his disciples,

Whilst the people were about him, and hearing him, and for their sakes too;

He said unto his disciples] Yea, he spake to the multitude, as well as to the disciples, as appears from *Matt.* xxiii. 1.

46 Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts;

And beware also of the Pharisees; for they are joined together in *Matthew*:

Which desire to walk in long robes] The rule for the length of a scholar's garment was this (c); "His flesh must not appear under his garments, as the light linen garments, and the like, they make in Egypt; nor must his garments be drawn upon

"the ground, as the garments of proud men, but "must reach to his heel, and his glove must reach "the tops of his fingers." According to this rule, the garments of the doctors were to be so long as to cover the whole body, even down to their heels, but were not to be any longer; and by this it appears their garments were very long; but they did not always go by this rule; some had their garments so long as to have a train after them; see the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 5.

And love greetings in the markets] Or in courts of judicature; they loved to be saluted with the titles of Rabbi, master, and the like:

And the highest seats in the synagogues] Which were next to the place where the book of the law was read and expounded, and where they might be seen by the people:

And the chief rooms at feasts] The uppermost rooms; see the notes on *Matt.* xxiii. 6, 7.

47 Which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation:

As the characters of them, in the preceding verse, expose their pride, this shews their avarice; they were very voracious and cruel; they did not spare widows, but devoured their substance:

And for a shew make long prayers] To cover their wickedness, pretending great devotion and religion:

The same shall receive greater damnation] Than openly profane sinners; doing such wickedness under a cloke of religion, will aggravate their condemnation; see the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 14.

CHAP. XXI.

In this chapter we have the notice Christ took, and the approbation he gave of a poor widow who cast two mites into the treasury, ch. 1—4. he foretelleth the destruction of the temple, and desolation of Jerusalem, ch. 5, 6. rehearseth the signs foregoing the last days, the tribulation and sorrow that would come on his disciples: promiseth his assistance and protection, ch. 7—19. sheweth them what to do in that time, ch. 20—24. foretelleth the signs of his last coming, and exhorteth them to observe them, by the similitude of the budding tree, ch. 25—33. and to expect his coming with watchfulness and prayer, ch. 34—38.

1 AND he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.

As Christ sat over against the treasury, looking upon the ground, he lift up his eyes; for the treasury was not in an high place, or above Christ, who was

(c) Maimon. Hilch. Dayot, c. 5. §. 9. Vid. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 37. 2. & Gloss. in ibid.

was right against it. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persian versions leave out this clause.

And saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury] See the note on *Mark* xii. 41.

2 And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

A poor widow, whom he took particular notice of above all the rest: the poor, and the widow, are regarded by him, and are his care; nor are their mean services, done in faith and from a principle of love, despised by him, but preferred to the greater services of others, where faith and love are wanting:

Casting in thither two mites] The value of a farthing. The Persian version renders it, "two bottoms of yarn;" see the note on *Mark* xii. 42.

3 And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all:

He said "to his disciples," as the Ethiopic version adds; these he called to him, upon this occasion, as appears from *Mark* xii. 43.

Of a truth, I say unto you, that this poor woman hath cast in more than they all] Than all the rich men; not in quantity, but in proportion to her ability: see the note on *Mark* xii. 43.

4 For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

Out of which they had much remaining; the same Hebrew word *נשאר* signifying to remain, and to abound: they had large possessions, and gave in much, and yet had a great deal left; out of which "they cast in unto the offerings of God; or gifts of God;" not as gifts unto him; or among the gifts of God; but into the treasury where the gifts, and free-will offerings were put; the same with the *Corban* in *Matthew* xxvii. 6. and so the Syriac version here renders it, "the house of the offering of God:" and it is expressed in the plural number; because there were several chests, in which these gifts were put, for various uses; see the note on *Mark* xii. 41.

But she of her penury hath cast in all the living she had] See the note on *Mark* xii. 44.

5 ¶ And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said,

These some, were the disciples; Mark says one of them: but it seems there were more than one; one might begin the discourse, and others join him:

VOL. II.

How it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts] See the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 1.

He said] What follows. This was as he went out of the temple.

6 As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

Some, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, read these words by way of interrogation; "Are these the things which ye behold?" Do ye look upon these with wonder and delight?

The days will come] And they are hastening on; a little while, a few years more:

In the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down] See the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 2.

7 ¶ And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?

That is, his disciples asked him, when they were come to the mount of Olives, and as he sat upon that, *Matt.* xxiv. 3.

Saying, Master, but when shall these things be?] When the temple shall be destroyed; and one stone shall not be left upon another;

And what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?] Which shews that this refers to the destruction of the temple; and to the signs following: see the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 3.

8 And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.

Deceived with false Christs, and false prophets:

For many shall come in my name] Making use of his name; taking it to them; not that they would pretend they were sent by him, but that they were he himself:

Saying, I am Christ] So the Syriac and Persian versions supply as we do: "and the time draweth near;" not that such will come; but when come they will say, that the time of the deliverance of the Jewish nation from the Roman yoke is at hand;

Go ye not therefore after them] Do not be their disciples, or follow them where they would lead you; for nothing but destruction will be the consequence of it.

9 But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things

N n

must

must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by.

Or seditions, and tumults; wars may design the wars of the Romans, against the Jews; and the commotions, or seditions, the intestine troubles among themselves:

Be not terrified] As if the destruction of the nation, city, and temple, would be at once:

For these things must first come to pass, but the end is not by and by] Or immediately. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, leave out this last word, and read as in *Matt.* xxiv. 6. see the note there.

10 Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:

See the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 7.

11 And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.

See the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 7.

And fearful sights] Or "terrible things;" whether heard, or seen, as dreadful thunderings, and lightnings; and a voice heard in the temple, saying, "Let us go hence;" and an ideot that went about several years together, saying, "Wo to the people, wo to the city," &c. A flame was seen in the temple, and the doors of it opened of themselves:

And great signs shall there be from heaven] As comets and blazing-stars, a flaming sword, or a comet like one, hanging over Jerusalem, and armies in the air engaged against each other (b). The Syriac version adds, "and great winters there shall be;" that is, very long and cold; and so the Persic version, "and winter, and cold, shall be protracted."

12 But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.

Before all these things come to pass:

They shall lay their hands on you] As the high priest, the priests, and the captain of the temple did upon the apostles, *Acts* iv. 1, 3. and v. 17, 18.

And persecute you] As upon the death of Stephen, *Acts* viii. 1.

Delivering you up to the synagogues] To be scourged there; or to the courts of judicature, the con-

sistories of the Jews, their great sanhedrim; before these the apostles were brought, *Acts* iv. 6, 7, 15. and v. 17.

And into prisons] As were all the apostles together, and Peter at another time separately, *Acts* iv. 3. and chap. v. 18. and xii. 4.

Being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake] For being called by his name, and calling upon it; for professing, and preaching his Gospel, see the note on *Matt.* x. 18.

13 And it shall turn to you for a testimony.

It shall turn to you] By this means they would have an opportunity of leaving their testimony for Christ before kings and rulers; and what they should meet with from them, would be a means of strengthening and confirming them in the truths of the Gospel; and be a proof and evidence to them of the certainty of the above things Christ had said should be accomplished; as well as be for a testimony against the rulers and governors, Jews and Gentiles, before whom they should be convened; see *Matt.* x. 18.

14 Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer:

Settle it, and resolve on this in your minds, and let it be a rule never to be departed from:

Not to meditate before what you shall answer] Not to sit down and study a form of words, and scheme of things, what to reply to the ensnaring questions that may be thought would be asked by kings and rulers, or any of the judges before whom they should be brought; it being natural for persons, especially of a low life, to be timorous and fearful to appear before such great personages; and to be thoughtful and solicitous what to say to any question that may be asked them; see the note on *Matt.* x. 19.

15 For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

I will give you a faculty of speaking, a freedom of expression, a door of utterance, a good degree of elocution, to speak properly, pertinently and freely to any point:

And wisdom] To answer with great propriety, and in the most prudent manner, to any difficult and ensnaring question; and to furnish with such knowledge of the Gospel, and with such gifts and abilities to preach and defend it, that they should be able to give a clear and distinct account of it, and prove every point in it, by the most strong and convincing arguments, and vindicate it against all objections:

(b) Vid. Josephi, de Bellis Jud. l. 6. c. 5.

Which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist] This was remarkably fulfilled in Peter and John, and in Stephen, *Acts* iv. 13, 14. and chap. vi. 10. The first word, *gainsay*, is left out in the Syriac and Persic versions.

16 And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death.

See the note on *Matt.* x. 21.

And kinsfolks and friends] The Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions add, *your*, to each of these relations, as *your parents*, &c.

And some of you shall they cause to be put to death] As Stephen was stoned to death; and James the brother of John Herod killed with the sword, *Acts* vii. 58. and chap. xii. 2. and indeed all of them were put to death, excepting John, before the destruction of Jerusalem.

17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.

See *Matt.* x. 22. and chap. xxiv. 9.

18 But there shall not an hair of your head perish.

That is, without the will of God, as in *Matt.* x. 29, 30. or not one shall perish, but what shall be restored again: or, the sense is, that though they should be betrayed by their friends, and hated, and persecuted, and imprisoned by their enemies, yet they should be no losers in the main; *all things should work together for their good*; and though even they should be put to death, yet that would be to their advantage, since instead of a temporal, troublesome life, they should enjoy an eternal and happy one: for this cannot be understood of entire preservation from all corporal damages and hurt; seeing it is before declared, that they should be put into prisons, and some of them put to death; nor of their preservation at the destruction of Jerusalem, for none of them was living at that time but the apostle John, and he was not in those parts.

19 In your patience possess ye your souls.

By patiently bearing all afflictions, reproaches, indignities and persecutions, enjoy yourselves; let nothing disturb or distress you; possess that peace and joy in your souls, which the world cannot take away; see *Rom.* v. 3—5. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, “ye shall possess;” and the sense may be this; by patient continuance, or by perseverance in the ways of God, and the truths of Christ, unto the end, ye shall be saved; shall find your lives, and enjoy your souls, as in *Matt.* x. 22. and chap. xxiv. 13.

20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions read, “with an army;” that is, with the Roman army, as it was by the army which Titus Vespasian brought against it, and besieged it with:

Then know that the desolation thereof is nigh] Signifying, that there would be no deliverance to be expected, as was when the Assyrian army under Rabshekah appeared against it; but that whenever the Roman army besieged it, its destruction might be looked upon as inevitable; nor was the siege raised until it was destroyed, which was about four years after.

21 Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.

See the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 16.

And let them which are in the midst of it] Either of Judea, as the preceding clause seems to direct the sense; or in Jerusalem, and which indeed was in the midst of Judea; and this sense is favoured by the Persic version, which renders it, “within the city;” let them go out of it, as the Christians did to Pella, mount Libanus, and other places.

And let not them that are in the countries] Either foreign countries, or in country towns and villages,

Enter therein] Either into Judea, or into Jerusalem. Contrary to this advice, they came from all countries to the feast of the passover at Jerusalem, and were there shut up by the besiegers, and destroyed (c).

22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

The days of God's vengeance on the Jewish nation, for their rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah;

That all things which are written may be fulfilled] As written by Moses and the prophets; see *Deut.* xxviii. 20—68. and xxxii. 22—26. *Isa.* vi. 10—12. *Dan.* ix. 26, 27.

23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.

See the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 19.

For there shall be great distress in the land] Of Jerusalem.

(c) Joseph. de Bell. Jud. l. 7. c. 17.

dea. The Greek word, *anagkē*, here used, properly signifies *necessity*, but here intends afflictions and distress; in which sense it is often used by the Septuagint, as in *Psaln* cvii. 6, 13, 19, 28. and cxix. 143. and *Jer.* ix. 15. and it is also by the Targumists adopted into their language, and used in the same sense (*d*): and indeed, the distress was very great, and such a time of tribulation as was never known since the beginning of the world, nor never will be the like; what with the enemy without, and their seditions and divisions within; the robberies, murders, and famine which prevailed and abounded, their miseries are not to be expressed:

And wrath upon this people] Of the Jews; even the wrath of God, as well as of man, which came upon them to the uttermost; and their own historian observes, that "God, who had condemned the people, turned every way of salvation to their destruction (*e*)."

24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Or by the "mouth of the sword," an Hebraism; see the Septuagint in *Judg.* i. 8, 25. The number of those that perished by the famine and sword, were eleven hundred thousand (*f*):

And shall be led away captive unto all nations] When the city was taken, the most beautiful of the young men were kept for the Roman triumph; and those that were above seventeen years of age, were sent bound into Egypt, to labour in the mines; many were distributed through the provinces, to be destroyed in the theatres by the sword or wild beasts; and those that were under seventeen years of age, were led captive to be sold; and the number of these only, were ninety-seven thousand (*g*):

And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles] The Romans, who ploughed up the city and temple, and laid them level with the ground; and which spot has been ever since inhabited by such as were not Jews, as Turks and Papists: and so it will be,

Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled] That is, till the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in; until the Gospel is preached all over the world, and all God's elect are gathered in out of all nations: and then the Jews will be converted, and return to their own land, and rebuild and inhabit Jerusalem: but till that time, it will be as it has been, and

still is, possessed by Gentiles. The word *Gentiles*, is left out in one of Beza's Exemplars, and so it is likewise in the Perfic version.

25 ¶ And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;

The sun and moon shall be darkened, and suffer very strange and surprising eclipses:

And in the stars] They shall fall from heaven, as in *Matt.* xxiv. 29. and so the Ethiopic version reads here: all which, as it may be understood in a literal sense, so it may likewise in a figurative and mystical one, and be interpreted of the changes there should be in the Jewish state; see the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 29. So the Jewish writers (*b*) interpret the sun, the light, the moon, and stars, in *Ecc.* xii. 2. By the *sun* they understand, the kingdom of the house of David; by the *light*, the law; by the *moon*, the sanhedrim; and by the *stars*, the Rabbins; and the same seem to be designed by the stars here:

And upon the earth distress of nations] Upon the land of Israel, in the several nations and countries belonging to it; as Galilee of the nations, Judea, and the region beyond Jordan, shall be in great distress:

With perplexity] Of mind, not knowing what to do, which way to go, or what step to take: the Syriac version instead of it, reads "wringing, or pressing of the hands;" which is done by persons when in an agony and great distress:

The sea and the waves roaring] Which design some unusual and extraordinary storms and tempests, and inundations in the sea of Galilee, or Tiberias, which would be so very terrible, so as to cause great uneasiness, distress, and perplexity; and so some versions render it, "because of the sea," &c.

26 Mens. hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

The fear of what these signs in the heaven, earth, and sea portend:

And for looking after those things which are coming on the earth] On the land of Judea:

For the powers of heaven shall be shaken] See the note on *Matt.* xxiv. 29.

27 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

See

(d) Vid. Targum in *Gen.* xlii. 24. & xxviii. 25. & Targum Sheni in *Ezra.* v. 1.

(e) Joseph. de Bello *Jud.* i. 6. c. 15.

(f) Joseph. de Bello *Jud.* i. 7. c. 49. & *Ruth.* Hist. *Eccles.* i. 3. c. 7.

(g) *Ibid.*

(b) In Prefat. *Ezra* Rabbati, fol. 38. 2. *Seder* in *Eccles.* xii. 2.

See the note on *Matt. xxiv. 30.*

28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

When the first of these signs appears, or any one of them:

Then look up, and lift up your heads] Be cheerful and pleasant; do not hang down your heads as bullrushes, but erect them, and put on a cheerful countenance, and look upwards, from whence your help comes; and look out wisely and intently, for your salvation and deliverance:

For your redemption draweth nigh] Not the redemption of their souls from sin, Satan, the law, the world, death, and hell; for that was to be obtained, and was obtained, before any of these signs took place; nor the redemption of their bodies at the last day, in the resurrection, called the day of redemption; for this respects something that was to be, in the present age and generation; see *y. 32.* but the deliverance of the apostles and other christians, from the persecutions of the Jews; which were very violent, and held till these times, and then they were freed from them: or by redemption is meant, the Redeemer, the Son of man, who shall now come in power and glory, to destroy the Jews, and deliver his people; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "for he draws nigh who shall save you."

29 And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig-tree, and all the trees;

He spake, that is, to his disciples:

Behold the fig-tree, and all the trees] That, or any other tree; see the note on *Matt. xxiv. 32.*

30 When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand.

Their buds, branches, and leaves; the Vulgate Latin adds, "of themselves."

Ye see and know of your own selves] Without any hint or direction from others, the case is so plain and obvious; the Syriac and Arabic versions read, of them; the trees, by their putting forth their buds and leaves; the Persic and Ethiopic versions leave out the clause "of yourselves;" and none of the Oriental versions read the word *see*:

The summer is now nigh at hand] See *Matthew xxiv. 32.*

31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

When ye see the signs before-mentioned, in *y. 8—11, 20, 25, 26.*

Know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand] A more visible and glorious display of the kingdom of the Messiah, in the destruction of his enemies, the Jews; see *Mark ix. 1.*

32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

33 Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away.

See the notes on *Matt. xxiv. 34, 35.* All the Oriental versions read here as there, *all these things* before related.

34 ¶ And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

Take heed to your souls and bodies, to your lives and conversations; be upon your watch and guard:

Lest your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness] With excessive eating and drinking; for these, as they oppress and burden the stomach, and disorder the body, so they stupify the senses, and make the mind dull and heavy, and unfit for spiritual and religious exercises; such as reading, meditation, and prayer:

And cares of this life] Concerning food and clothing, what you shall eat or drink, or wherewith ye shall be clothed; all such anxious and worldly cares being that to the soul as intemperance is to the body; for there is such a thing as being inebriated with the world, as well as with wine:

And so that day come upon you unawares] The day of Jerusalem's destruction; and this suggests, that such would be the carnality and security of some persons, and so they would be surprised with ruin at once; see chapter xvii. 26—30.

35 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

A snare in which a bird is suddenly taken, and cannot get out again; the Persic version renders it, "as lightening and the splendor of the sun;" which break out at once, and enlighten the whole earth; so the destruction of the Jewish nation should be sudden and unavoidable, and universal; for it should come

On all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth] Or land of Judea; and so it was, for not only Jerusalem, but all Judea and Galilee suffered in this desolation.

36 Watch

36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Watch and pray against every sin, snare, and temptation; particularly, against the above things, surfeiting, drunkenness, and worldly cares; pray continually for fresh supplies of grace:

[*That ye may be counted worthy*] Not for watchfulness and prayer, but through the grace and goodness of God:

[*To escape all these things that shall come to pass*] The dreadful miseries and distresses that shall come upon the Jews:

[*And to stand before the Son of man*] With intrepidity, confidence, and pleasure; and meet him at his coming in this way with joy and comfort; and likewise at death, and at judgment; see 1 John ii. 28.

37 And in the day-time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called *the mount of Olives*.

That is, "Jesus was teaching," as the Perfic version expresses it; his constant method every day, till the feast of passover came, was to go up to the temple, and there openly and freely preach the Gospel to the people, who resorted thither in great numbers to hear him:

[*And at night he went out*] Of the temple, and out of the city:

[*And abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives*] Very likely to pray, both for himself and for his disciples; his time with them being short.

38 And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.

Not all the people in Jerusalem, every inhabitant of the city; this word, *all*, is often to be taken with a restriction; and here it designs a large number; the Perfic version renders it, "vast multitudes;" these, some out of curiosity, and others from a real love to him and his ministry, rose betimes, and came early.

[*To him in the temple, for to hear him*] Which is said, in commendation of Christ's hearers, and is worthy of imitation; as the former verse is a commendation of the preacher, in his constancy and diligence in his work, and following it with his prayers.

CHAP. XXII.

[*In this chapter we have an account of the rulers conspiring to kill Christ, &c. 1, 2. Satan tempteth Judas to betray him, &c. 3-6. Christ command-*

eth Peter and John to prepare the passover, &c. 7-13. He eateth it with his disciples: and instituteth his last supper, &c. 14-20. Judas's treachery foretold, &c. 21-23. Christ's advice to his disciples, &c. 24-30. He warneth them all, especially Peter, of Satan's temptations, &c. 31-38. Praying on the mount, he is strengthened by an angel, &c. 39-44. Exhorteth his disciples to watch and pray, &c. 45, 46. He is betrayed by Judas, &c. 47-49. One of them cuts off the ear of the high priest's servant; and he is cured again by Christ, &c. 50-53. Peter denieth him thrice, &c. 54-60. He lamenteth his fall, &c. 61, 62. Christ before the Jewish council confesseth he is the Son of God, &c. 63-71.

NOW the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the passover.

Which feast lasted seven days; during which the Jews eat their bread without leaven, in commemoration of the haste in which they went out of Egypt; being such, that they had not time to leaven their dough, but took it, with their kneading-troughs along with them, as it was; and as figurative of the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, with which the Gospel-feast is to be kept; see Exod. xii. 34. 1 Cor. v. 8.

[*Which is called the passover*] Because the Lord passed over the houses of the Israelites, when he slew all the first-born in Egypt. Now the time of this feast drew near, when the conspiracy was formed against the life of Christ: Matthew and Mark are more express, and suggest, that it was two days before the passover; see Matt. xxvi. 2. and Mark xiv. 1.

2 And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people.

Matthew adds, after scribes, and the elders of the people; which made up the great sanhedrim and council of the nation; these met together, not in their usual place, the temple, but at the palace of Caiaphas, the high priest; see Matt. xxvi. 3.

[*And sought how they might kill him*] That is, Jesus, as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read; they had determined before; upon the advice of Caiaphas, to put him to death, and very likely had fixed what kind of death he should die; see John xi. 49, 50, 53. and now they consult together of the manner of bringing it about; and at what time; and the majority were not for doing it on a feast-day, when there was a great concourse of people, but with more privacy:

[*For they feared the people*] Which were now in great multitudes with him, who came along with

with him from Galilee, and other parts; and had hosannaed him into the city, and still abode with him; and their numbers were increasing: and the sanhedrim were aware, that at the passover there would be still a greater company of people from all parts of the land; and they might conclude, that he would have a large number of his friends come out of Galilee, where he had been for the most part teaching, and working miracles; and they were afraid, should they lay hold on him publicly, the people would rise and stone them; at least would rescue him out of their hands, and disappoint them of their designs.

3 ¶ Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

At the same time that the sanhedrim were sitting, and consulting about the death of Christ, *Satan*, or the adversary, as the word signifies, the devil, who is the enemy of the Messiah, the woman's seed, entered into Judas; not corporally, as he did into those that were possessed by him; but he entered "into his heart," as the Ethiopic version renders it; he put it into his heart to betray him, as it is said in *John* xiii. 2. he stirred up, and worked upon the corruptions of his heart; suggested evil things to his mind, and baited his temptations agreeable to his malice and covetousness: and this man was

Surnamed Iscariot] To distinguish him from another apostle of the same name; concerning this his surname, see the notes on *Matt.* x. 4. and *John* xiii. 2.

Being of the number of the twelve] Apostles, or disciples of Jesus, as the Persian version reads, and which is an aggravation of his sin: now this being two days before the passover, shews that the sop which Judas took, after which the devil entered into him, *John* xiii. 27. could not be the passover sop, but was the sop he eat at the supper in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, so long before it.

4 And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them.

He went from Christ, and the rest of the apostles, out of Bethany, when it was night, about two miles from Jerusalem, directly:

And communed with the chief priests and captains] That is, of the temple, as in *Ps.* 52. and so the Persian version reads, "the militia of the temple;" and the Syriac version renders it, "the captains of the militia of the temple;" instead of *captains*, the Ethiopic version reads *scribes*, and so does the

Arabic, and which adds, "and the soldiers;" but these captains were not Roman officers, or soldiers, but ecclesiastical persons, who presided in the temple, and were heads and governors over bodies of men employed there; of which sort were the following (a): "There were fifteen, *מנהגים* presidents, or governors," in the sanctuary, and so "they were appointed for ever, over each of these fifteen things, one governor; and they are these: "one was over the times, or solemn seasons; the "second, over the shutting of the gates; the "third, over those that kept watch, &c. And "every one of these governors, had under him "abundance of men, that so they might prepare "the business they presided over." These seem rather to be meant, than the *watch* in the temple; which, though kept in several places, there was but one single person that presided over it; as appears from the above account, and from what follows; and who was called "the man of the mountain of the house, or the governor of the temple (b):" "In three places the priests kept watch in the "sanctuary, in the house of *Abtines*, and in the "house of *Nitzotz*, and in the house of *Moked*; "and the Levites in twenty and one places.—The "man of the mountain of the house, went round "every ward with torches burning before him, "and every one that was not standing, he said to "him, *Peace be on thee*; and if he found that he was "asleep, he struck him with his staff, and had "power to burn his garments." Whence it does not appear to me, that there were heads or captains over every ward, as Dr Lightfoot suggests, but one over them all; perhaps these captains may be the same with the *governors of the temple*, in *1 Esdras* i. 8. and vii. 2. But be these who they will, Judas, it seems, was informed where, and upon what they were met together; and he went to them, and conversed with them:

How he might betray him unto them] In the most secret manner, and with the least noise and disturbance.

5 And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.

For nothing could be more opportune and agreeable to them, than that one of his own disciples should meet them at this juncture, and offer to put him into their hands in the most private manner;

And covenanted to give him money] The Ethiopic version reads, "thirty pieces of silver;" which was the sum they agreed to give him, and he accepted of; see *Matt.* xxvi. 15.

6 And

(a) Maimonides *Hilehot Cele Hamikdash*, c. 7. §. 1, 2. *Mishna* Shekalim, c. 5. §. 1, 2. (b) *Mishna* Moadot, c. 1. §. 1, 2.

6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.

He undertook to deliver him into their hands; he laid himself under obligation to do it; he faithfully promised he would. The Arabic version renders it, "he gave thanks;" for the money he received, being well pleased he had made such a bargain; and so the word here used sometimes signifies; and indeed commonly either to *confess*, or to *give thanks*, in which latter sense it is used in *Matt. xi. 25.* but here rather it is to be understood in the sense of promising:

And sought opportunity] The two days following before the passover:

To betray him unto them in the absence of the people] When they were gone from him, and he was alone; but found no opportunity of doing it this way, which they had agreed upon with him, and he had promised, until the night of the passover, when he was alone in the garden with his disciples.

7 ¶ Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

The first day of unleavened bread, the fourteenth day of the month Nisan:

When the passover must be killed] That is, "the passover-lamb," as the Perfic version renders it; and which, according to the law in *Exod. xii. 6.* was to be done between the two evenings; see the note on *Matthew xxvi. 17.*

8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.

That is, "Jesus sent Peter and John," as the Syriac, Perfic, and Ethiopic versions express it; these were two favourite disciples of Christ, and were now sent by him from Bethany to Jerusalem:

Saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat] Eat it together: so servants used to be sent, to go and prepare the passover for their masters; see the note on *Matthew xxvi. 17.*

9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare?

Where? meaning, not in what village, town or city, for it was a fixed and determined thing that the passover should be eat at Jerusalem, and no where else; see *Deut. xvi. 2.* but in what house in Jerusalem?

10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in.

Behold! giving them a sign, whereby they should

know the very house; where he would keep the passover:

When ye are entered into the city] That is, the city of Jerusalem; for Christ and his disciples were now at Bethany, from whence he sent Peter and John thither, where only the passover was to be killed and eat:

There shall a man meet you bearing a pitcher of water] The Perfic version adds, "upon his back;" for which he had been to some well or fountain in the city, in order to mix with wine at the passover:

Follow him into the house where he entereth in] So that it seems they were to return, and go after him into the house, where he went with his pitcher of water. This was a trial of the faith and obedience of the disciples, and, as the sequel shews, a proof of the omniscience and Deity of Christ.

11 And ye shall say unto the good man of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

Say to the master of it; for the man bearing the pitcher of water seems to be a servant only:

The Master saith unto thee] By these his two disciples, Peter and John; it looks as if the word *Master*, as peculiar to Christ, and by way of eminency belonging to him, *Matt. xxiii. 10.* was well known to those who believed, and were followers of him, as the man of this house might be; see *John xi. 28.* The Syriac and Perfic versions read, "our Master saith," and leave out the other phrase, *to thee*:

Where is the guestchamber] Or dining-room: the word properly signifies an inn, or place to bait at; so called, from travellers unloosing their burdens there, either from themselves, or their beasts; the Arabic version renders it, "the place of my rest" a place for refreshment and feasting:

Where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?] Who were a sufficient number to eat the passover-lamb by themselves; see the note on *Matt. xxvi. 18.*

12 And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.

Furnished with all things necessary to eat and drink out of, at the passover;

There make ready] The Ethiopic version adds, *for us*, as in *Mark xiv. 15.* The Perfic version renders it, "there prepare a place;" but this was prepared already; the words design the preparation of the passover, and every thing proper for it.

13 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

Went

Went from Bethany to Jerusalem:

And found as he had said unto them] They met the man with the pitcher of water, and by following him, found the house Christ meant to keep the passover at; they told the master of it what Christ ordered them, who immediately shewed them a very convenient room, as he had described to them:

And they made ready the passover] Provided a lamb, and got it killed and dressed, and prepared every thing necessary for the keeping of the feast, according to divine appointment; see the note on *Matt. xxvi. 19.*

14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

When it was evening, the last of the two evenings, when it was dark, at least after six o'clock; see the note on *Matthew xxvi. 20.*

He sat down] Or lay along on a couch, as was the custom; see the note, as before:

And the twelve apostles with him] For Judas, after he had made his bargain with the chief priests, scribes, and elders, came and took his place with the rest of the apostles, both to cover his sin, and to watch the best opportunity of betraying his master.

15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

He said to the twelve apostles, as they were eating the passover, it being usual to talk and converse much at such a time; see the note on *Matt. xxvi. 21.*

With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer] Not for the sake of eating; for though he was traduced as a glutton, and did often eat and drink in a free and familiar way, both at the tables of Pharisees and of publicans and sinners; yet he was not a man given to appetite; witness his fast of forty days and forty nights, and his great negligence of himself, which sometimes obliged his disciples to pray him to eat; see *John iv. 31, 34.* Indeed, according to the Jewish canons, it was not judged proper that a man should eat much on the day before the passover, that he might be hungry, and eat the passover, *בְּחָצֵק* *with desire* (c), or with an appetite. Our Lord may allude to this; but this was not the thing he meant; nor merely does he say this on account of the passover, as it was God's ordinance; though as he was made under the law, and that was in his heart, he had a great regard to it, and a delight in it; which he had shewn in his frequent and constant

attendance on it from his youth: but though he had kept many passovers, yet of none of them did he say what he does of this, which was his fourth passover from his entrance on his public ministry, and his last: two reasons are suggested in the text why he so greatly desired to eat this passover; the one is, because he should eat it *with* his disciples: an emphasis lies on the phrase, *with you*, to whom, and not so much to the passover, and the eating of that, was his *desire*; as it is to all his people: it was so from everlasting, when he desired them as his spouse and bride; and in time, when he became incarnate, suffered, died, and gave himself for them: his desire is towards them whilst in unregeneracy, that they may be converted; and to them when converted, notwithstanding all their backslidings and revoltings. His desire is to their persons, and the comeliness and beauty of them, which he himself hath put upon them; and to their graces, and the exercise of them, with which he is ravished; and to their company, and communion with them, which he chooses and delights in: and his desire is towards their being with him to all eternity; and he delighted in the fore-views thereof from eternity; and is the joy set before him, and which carried him through his sufferings and death; and is the amount and accomplishment of all his prayers and intercessions: and the other reason of this his strong desire in the text is, that this was the last passover, and that his sufferings and death were just at hand, and which he longed to have over; not that he desired these sufferings for the sake of them, which could not be agreeable to, and desirable by his human nature; but because of the effects of them; since hereby justice would be satisfied, the law would be fulfilled, sin atoned for, and the salvation of his elect obtained; for whom he bore the strongest affection, and whom he loved with a love of complacency, and whose salvation he most earnestly desired, and even sufferings for the sake of it.

16 For I say unto you, I will no more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

I will no more eat of the passover, which now, with the rest of the ceremonial law, was to be abolished:

Until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God] Signifying, not that he should eat of it in the kingdom of God, where it would be fulfilled; seeing the passover was never more to take place, neither in the Gospel-dispensation, nor in the heavenly glory; both which may be meant by *the kingdom of God*; but that he should never eat more of it in this ceremonial way, since it would have its accomplishment in each of those states: and it has

(c) Maimon. & Bartenora in *Misn. Pesachim*, c. 10. §. 1.

been already fulfilled under the Gospel-dispensation, which is often meant by the kingdom of God, in himself, who is the passover sacrificed for us, 1 Cor. v. 7, for the passover-lamb was a type of Christ, and he is the sum and substance of that shadow, and the fulfilling end of that type; it had its accomplishment in him; of which see the note on 1 Cor. v. 7. and it will also be fulfilled in the kingdom of heaven, or eternal glory; when there will be a perfect deliverance of the saints from sin, Satan, and the world; which the deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt was typical of, commemorated in the passover: and therefore then will be sung the song of Moses and the Lamb; and then will Christ and his true followers eat and drink together in his Father's kingdom, and spend an endless eternity in never-fading joys and pleasures.

17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:

He took the cup: there were four cups of wine drank at the passover, which the poorest man in Israel was obliged to drink; and over each of which a blessing was pronounced (*d*): and this was one of them, and seems to be the first; for the passover was begun by mixing a cup of wine, and blessing it, or giving thanks over it (*e*); and which was usually done in the following manner (*f*): "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, who hast created the fruit of the vine," &c. After this every one drank of his cup, and put it on the table: accordingly it follows,

And said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves] That is, every one drink of it.

18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

That is, I will drink no more wine; (see the blessing at the passover-cup in the notes on the preceding verse:)

Until the kingdom of God shall come] With power, as in Mark ix. 1. in the resurrection of Christ from the dead; in his exaltation and session at God's right hand; in the pouring forth of the Spirit on the apostles; in the conversion of great multitudes both in Judea, and in the Gentile world; in the destruction of the Jews; in the latter-day-glory; and in the ultimate state of happiness and bliss in the world to come. The Ethiopic version reads, until I drink it new in the king-

(d) Mishna, Chamaa Umetsah, c. 7. §. 9, 10.

(e) Ibid. c. 8. §. 1.

(f) Haggada Shel Pessach, fol. 241. 1, 2. ed. Babil. p. 3, 4. ed. Rittshgel.

dom of God, as in Mark xiv. 25. see the note on Matt. xxvi. 29.

19 ¶ And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

He gave thanks, or blessed it, as in Matt. xxvi. 26. Mark xiv. 22. Here begins the account of the Lord's supper, after the passover was eaten:

And brake it, and gave unto them] To the disciples, as is expressed in Matt. xxvi. 26.

Saying, This is my body] See the note on Matt. xxvi. 26.

Which is given for you] Or will be given for you, as an offering for sin, in your room and stead; and accordingly it was given into the hands of men, and of justice, and unto death. The phrase denotes the substitution and sacrifice of Christ in the room of his people, and the voluntariness of it; and is only mentioned by Luke in this account: the apostle Paul writes, which is broken for you; 1 Cor. xi. 24. alluding to the breaking of the bread in the ordinance, and as expressing the bruises, wounds, sufferings, and death of Christ: the Ethiopic version here adds, "for the redemption of many."

This do in remembrance of me] That is, eat this bread in remembrance of my love to you, and in commemoration of my body being offered up for you. Observe this ordinance in the manner I now institute it, in time to come, in memory of what I am about to do for you; for this direction does not only regard the present time and action, but is intended as a rule to be observed by the churches of Christ in all ages, to his second coming: and it is to be observed, that the Lord's supper is not a reiteration, but a commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ. This phrase is only mentioned by Luke here, and by the apostle Paul, who adds it also at the drinking of the cup, 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25. The Peric version here reads, "do this perpetually in remembrance of me."

20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

He took the cup, both after the passover, and after the Lord's supper; that is, after he had eat the bread, and gave thanks over it, and gave it to his disciples, bidding them drink of it, as in Matt. xxvi. 27. see the note there:

Saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you] The Ethiopic version reads, for many; as in Matt. xxvi. 28. where it is added, for the remission of sins; see the note there.

21 ¶ But

21 ¶ But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.

By the hand, is meant, not figuratively the counsel, contrivance, and conspiracy of Judas to betray him, as the word is used in 2 Sam. xiv. 19. but literally the hand of Judas, which was then dipping in the dish with Christ, Matt. xxvi. 23. and it follows here,

[Is with me on the table] And is an aggravation of his sin, that one that sat with him at his table, eat bread with him, and dipped his morsel in the same dish, should be the betrayer of him, according to the prophecy in Psalm xli. 9. as well as describes and points at the person that should do this action, even one of his disciples; for which disciples he had just now said, his body is given, and his blood is shed. The phrase, with me, is left out in the Syriac and Persic versions. From Luke's account it appears most clearly, that Judas was not only at the passover, but at the Lord's supper, since this was said when both were over.

22 And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but wo unto that man by whom he is betrayed!

That is, dies (g), which is going the way of all the earth, Joshua xxiii. 14.

[As it was determined] In the counsels and purposes of God, and agreed to by Christ in the covenant of grace; see Acts ii. 23. and chap. iv. 28. The death of Christ, the manner of it, and the means by which it was brought about, were all predetermined by God; yet this did not in the least excuse the sin of those concerned in it, nor exempt them from punishment:

[But wo unto that man by whom he is betrayed] Who not only came to an untimely end, and died an infamous death by his own hands, but went to his own place, the place of everlasting torments allotted him: wherefore in Matthew xxvi. 24. it is added, it had been good for that man if he had not been born; see the note there.

23 And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

Two days before, at the supper in Bethany, when the same thing was hinted to them, they looked at one another, John xiii. 22. as persons in the utmost surprise and consternation, not being able for a while, either to speak to Christ, or one another; but now they inquired among themselves, and of Christ likewise, Matt. xxvi. 21.

(g) The Jews say, 'There is no going but what means death;' T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 12. 2.

[Which of them it was that should do this thing] So barbarous, shocking, and horrible.

24 ¶ And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

[A strife, &c.] The Persic version reads, "at a certain time there was a contention among the apostles;" and some think, that this refers to the time when the mother of Zebedee's two sons asked the favour of Christ, to set one of them at his right hand, and the other at his left, in his kingdom; which greatly incensed the other disciples, and occasioned a dispute about precedence; when our Lord interposed, and used much the same arguments as here; and which, it is thought, Luke here inserts out of the proper place. The Ethiopic version renders it, "then his disciples disputed among themselves;" pinning it down to this very time: and what might give occasion to the present dispute, may be what Christ had said concerning the kingdom of God, §. 16, 18. which they understanding of the temporal kingdom of the Messiah, and fancying by his words that it was near at hand, began to strive among themselves, who should be the greatest in it; or it might be brought on by their inquiry among themselves, who should betray him, which might lead them on each one to throw off the imputation from himself, and to commend himself as a steady follower of Jesus, and to express his hopes of being his chief favourite, and principal minister in his kingdom: for the strife was,

[Which of them should be accounted the greatest] By Christ; or that should be so in his kingdom. Perhaps the contention might be chiefly between Peter, and James and John, the two sons of Zebedee, and who were the favourite disciples of Christ; and Peter might urge his seniority, and what Christ had said to him, Matt. xvi. 18, 19. and the rather, since it is certain Satan was now busy about him; wherefore Christ calls him by name, and singles him out from among the rest, §. 31.

25 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

He said to the disciples; that is, "Jesus said to them," as the Syriac and Persic versions express;

[The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them] By which our Lord would dissuade his disciples from seeking to introduce a superiority over one another, since this was the practice of the heathens, of the men of the world, of ignorant Gentiles; whereas Christ's kingdom was a spiritual kingdom,

kingdom, and not of this world, and therefore not to be managed in such a way.

And they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.] Either by themselves, or by their court-flatterers, to cover their ambition, tyranny, and cruelty. Two of the kings of Egypt were called by the name *Euergetes* (*h*); the word that is here used, and translated *benefactors*; and it was commonly given to other kings, princes, and men in power: so Cyrus was called by the Armenians; Antigonus by the Greeks; and Phylacus among the Persians: the same name was given to Mithridates king of Pontus, to Titus Aelius Hadrianus, to Menander, to Marcus Aurelius Severus, and to Cato Uticensis, and others (*i*).

26 But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger: and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

See the note on *Matthew* xx. 26.

But he that is greatest among you.] In age or gifts, or would be thought to be the greatest, who is most ambitious of grandeur and authority, which perhaps might be Peter's case, who was the oldest man:

Let him be as the younger.] As John, the beloved disciple, who was the youngest of them; and be as modest and as humble as he; and reckon himself as in his place, and condescend to men of low estates, and esteem each other, even the youngest, better than himself. So the phrase (*k*), חֲכָמִים וְכַנְיָוִים, "both greater and lesser;" is used of the elder and younger.

And he that is chief.] That is, a spiritual ruler and governor in the church of God, as all the disciples were:

As he that doth serve.] For the apostles and ministers of the word, though they are over others in the Lord, and have the rule over them, yet they are servants for Jesus' sake, and so ought to reckon themselves; see the note on *Matt.* xx. 27.

27 For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.

Christ appeals to themselves, and puts a case that is plain and obvious to any one, who is the greater, and more honourable person:

He that sitteth at meat.] That sits, or lies down at table, and another waits on him:

Or he that serveth?] That stands behind, observes orders, and ministers to those that sit down?

Is not he that sitteth at meat?] You, and every one must own, that he is the greatest, and most honourable person:

But I am among you as he that serveth.] Christ took upon him the form of a servant, and instead of being ministered unto, ministered to others; and had very lately, but two days before, girt himself, and took a basin and a towel, and washed and wiped the feet of his disciples: now our Lord, by his own example throughout the whole of his conduct among them, as well as by such a single action, would dissuade from their ambitious views of superiority over each other, and to learn of him who was meek and lowly, and by love serve one another.

28 Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.

Continued with him from the beginning of his ministry, to that very time; they abode by him, and never departed from him, when others withdrew and walked no more with him:

In my temptations.] Not in the wilderness by Satan; for they were not with him then, not being as yet called to be his disciples and followers: but in his afflictions, by the reproaches, and cavils, and insinuating questions of the scribes and Pharisees, and their attempts upon him to take away his life by stoning, &c. which were trials and temptations to him. So the Ethiopic version renders it, "in my affliction:" now, since they had stood their ground, and firmly adhered to him in all his trials, he would have them still continue with him, and in his interest, though they should not have that temporal glory and grandeur they expected; but, on the contrary, fresh troubles and exercises, reproach, persecution, and death itself; and, for their encouragement, he promises both pleasure and honour; though of another sort than what they were seeking after.

29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;

A kingdom, &c.] Not a temporal one, but a spiritual one; and either intends that they should have in the government of the church, peculiar to them, as apostles, they being set in the first and highest place and office in the church; and have the keys of the kingdom of heaven, or the Gospel-dispensation and church-state committed to them; whereby they should open the door of faith to men, both to Jews and Gentiles; and have the power of binding and loosing, or of pronouncing things to be lawful or unlawful, to be retained and used, and even of remitting sins in a ministerial and declarative way; and not only of rebuking, and improving for sin with authority, but even of inflicting

(h) Alex. ab Alexandro Genial. Dier. l. 1. c. 2.

(i) Vid. Cuper. Inscript. & Marmora, p. 283, 284.

(k) Targum in 2 Chron. xxxi. 15.

ing corporal punishment on delinquents, and that in a very severe way; as in the cases of Ananias and Sapphira, Elymas the forcerer, the incestuous person at Corinth, and Hymenæus and Philetus: or the kingdom of grace, which they had in common with all the saints; which lies not in outward things, but in *righteousness, peace, and joy*, and which can never be moved, or taken away; by virtue of which Christ reigns in the hearts of his people, and they are kings and priests to God; and have power, as princes, with God and men; and overcome, and reign over their own lusts, and the world, and Satan: or that kingdom, and dominion, and greatness of the kingdom, which shall be given to the saints of the most high, *Dan. vii. 27.* in the latter-day-glory and kingdom-state of Christ on earth, when the saints shall reign with him: or the kingdom of glory prepared from the foundation of the world; a gift of our heavenly Father's, which the saints are called unto, made meet for, and have a right unto in Christ; and are heirs of, and into which he will introduce them at the last day: and indeed, all these senses may be taken into the account of this text:

As my Father hath appointed unto me] A kingdom, not of nature and providence, which he has in right of nature, being of the same essence, and having the same perfections with his Father; and in right of creation, all being made by him; for this is not given, or appointed to him; nor is he accountable for it to any, since he receives it not from any: but his mediatorial kingdom, which is given him, and which he will deliver up the account of to his Father another day; see *Dan. vii. 14.* *1 Cor. xv. 24.* which took place here on earth in the days of his flesh; though it was not of this world, nor came with observation, or with worldly pomp and splendor; and became more visible upon his resurrection from the dead, his exaltation at the right hand of God, the effusion of the Spirit, the great conversions among men, and the destruction of the Jewish nation. This kingdom takes in the whole Gospel-dispensation, reaching from the times of Christ's being in the flesh, to his second coming; and comprehends all the elect of God, who are a kingdom of priests, or a royal priesthood, in whose hearts Christ reigns by his Spirit and Grace; it includes the whole visible Gospel-church-state on earth, which is God's holy hill of Sion, over which he has set Christ, as king; and which he governs by laws of his own enacting, and by governors appointed under him, among whom he will reign; first, more spiritually in the latter day, when the Gospel shall be spread all over the world, and the kingdoms of this world, shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and next personally with all his saints together, for the space

of a thousand years; and last of all, triumphantly to all eternity, in the ultimate glory and kingdom of his Father.

30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

In my kingdom, &c.] In the Gospel-dispensation, or Gospel-church-state, in which Christ has a table, called *the table of the Lord*, *1 Cor. x. 21.* which is the Lord's supper; and is a table well furnished with the best of provisions, his flesh and blood, of which believers may eat and drink with a hearty welcome; Christ himself being present to sup with them: and in his personal reign on earth, where will be the marriage-supper of the Lamb, to which all the saints will be called; and will sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and be regaled with joys and pleasures not to be expressed: and in the ultimate glory, when the Lamb shall feed them, and shall lead them to fountains of water; and they shall never hunger nor thirst more, but shall have fulness of joy, and be satiated with pleasures that will never fade nor end:

And sit on thrones] Expressive of the great honour and dignity they were raised to, both in this, and the other world, from a low and mean estate, being before as beggars on the dunghill, now among princes, and on thrones, even on the same throne with Christ; see *1 Sam. ii. 8.* *Rev. iii. 21.*

Judging the twelve tribes of Israel] Doctrinally and ministerially; accusing the Jews, and arraigning them for the crucifixion of Christ; passing sentence upon them, and condemning them; and declaring that they should be damned for their disbelief and rejection of him; see the note on *Matthew xix. 28.*

31 ¶ And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:

Simon, Simon, &c.] Peter is particularly and by name spoken to, either because he might be a principal person in the debate and contention about superiority, mentioned in the context; or because he was chiefly to suffer in the following temptation of Satan; or because he was generally the mouth of the rest of the apostles: and he is addressed, not by the name of Peter, the name Christ gave him, when he first called him, signifying his future solidity, firmness, and steadfastness; because in this instance, he would not give any proof of it; but by his former name, *Simon*; and which is repeated, partly to shew the earnestness of Christ in the delivery of what follows, and partly to express his affectionate concern for him; so the Jews observe:

observe (1) concerning God's calling, *Moses, Moses*, Exod. iii. 4. כְּמוֹל לֶשׁוֹן חֲבֵרָא "the doubling of the word," is expressive of love, and finding grace and favour; even as it is said, *Abraham, Abraham*, Gen. xxii. 11. or it may be to excite attention to what Christ was about to say. Though the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read the first of these, *to Simon*, thus; "Jesus said to Simon,"

Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you] Not only Peter, but all the apostles; for the word *you*, is plural: Satan, the enemy of the woman's seed, the accuser of the brethren, the wicked one, and the tempter, desired, asked leave of God, for he can do nothing without permission, that he might have these disciples under his power, and in his hand; just as he got leave to have the goods, and even the body of Job in his hand, and vain would have had his life and soul too, could he have obtained it; and he would have the lives and souls of others; for he goes about, seeking to devour whom he may: and he had now an evil eye upon the apostles, and wanted an opportunity to gratify his malice and envy: his end in desiring to have him in his power was,

That he may sift you as wheat] Not to separate the chaff from the wheat, but to make them look like all chaff, by covering the wheat of grace with the chaff of sin and corruption; or to destroy the wheat, was it possible; or to toss them to and fro, as wheat is tossed in a sieve; that is, to afflict and distress them; see *Amos ix. 9*. by scattering them, both from Christ and one another; by filling them with doubts about Jesus being the Messiah and Redeemer; and by frightening them with the fears of enemies and of death, which end he obtained; see *Matt. xxvi. 56. Luke xxiv. 21. John xx. 19*.

32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

Have prayed, &c.] Christ prayed for all the apostles; but particularly for Peter, because he was in the greatest danger: whether the prayer Christ refers to was that in *John xvii.* in which are many passages relating to the preservation, sanctification, final perseverance and glorification of the apostles, as well as of other saints, as in *1. 9, 11, 15, 17, 20, 24*. and so these words might be spoken a little after that prayer was ended, which was about this same time; or whether it was any other, and only mental, and not vocal, is not certain: however, the petition was,

That thy faith fail not] Satan in his temptations strikes principally at the faith of God's people; that

being a grace which gives much glory to God, and in the exercise of which believers have much peace, joy, and comfort; both which he envies and grudges; and it is also a shield which keeps off, and quenches his fiery darts, and is a piece of armour he is sadly harassed with; and therefore endeavours all he can to weaken and destroy it, or wrest it out of their hands; but though, through the power of sin and the force of temptation, it may fail as to some degree of the steadfastness of it, as to the actings and exercise of it, and as to the sense believers may have of it; yet never as to its principle, it being an irrevocable gift of God's grace; a work of his almighty power; a solid and substantial grace, even the substance of things hoped for; an immortal and incorruptible seed, and of which Christ is the author and finisher: and to nothing more is its security owing, than to the prayers of Christ, which are always heard, and to his powerful mediation, and prevalent intercession. Christ is the advocate of his people; he prays that they might have faith; and then he prays that it may not fail, and it shall not, notwithstanding all the opposition of hell and earth unto it:

And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren] Peter was now a converted man, and had been for some years; but whereas he would fall by temptation into the very great sin of denying his Lord, and which was attended with such circumstances as made him look like an unconverted, and an unregenerate man; his recovery by the fresh exercise of faith in Christ, and repentance for his sins, is called a conversion; and which was not his own act, but owing to the power and efficacy of divine grace; see *Jer. xxxi. 18*. Some versions render it in the imperative, "in time, convert, turn" or return," and *strengthen thy brethren*; as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions; as he afterwards did: for whereas all the disciples forsook Christ and fled, some one way, and some another, Peter, after his recovery, got them together again and returned with them to Jerusalem; when they with him assembled together, till the third day Christ was risen: he strengthened their faith in the Messiah, and put them upon filling up the place of Judas, by choosing another apostle; and on the day of pentecost preached a most excellent sermon, which, as it was made useful for the conversion of three thousand sinners, was, doubtless, a means of confirming the minds of the disciples; and he has left two exceeding useful epistles for the strengthening of his brethren in all ages of time; the design of which is to establish the saints in faith and holiness, that they may not be drawn aside, and fall from the steadfastness of their faith, either by the lusts of the flesh, or by the persecutions of men, or by the error of the wicked.

33 And

(1) Tzeror Hammor, fol. 88. 4. Jarchi in Gen. xlii. 21. Bemidbar Rabba, §. 14. fol. 217. 1.

33 And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.

That is, Simon, or Simeon, said unto him, as the Syriac and Persic versions express it; he made a reply to Jesus, saying, as one fearless of danger, and confident in himself:

I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and to death] He suggests, that he was not afraid of Satan nor of his temptations, of being sifted, shaken, and tossed by him: he was not to be frightened out of his faith by him, or to be scared with a prison, and death itself; he was ready for both; and they were welcome, come when they would: and rather than part from, or deny his Lord, he was then prepared to go with him, at once, to either of them. The phrase, *to go*, is not in the Syriac version.

34 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

"To him," as all the Oriental versions add; to Peter, as what is said shews; that is, "Jesus" said to him," as the Syriac and Persic versions express:

I tell thee, Peter] Who knew him and his heart, better than he did himself, as well as knew what was to come, and what would befall him; and therefore declares it, as he does with the greatest assurance and certainty, and which might be depended on, and accordingly came to pass.

The cock shall not crow this day] In this night, as in Mark xiv. 30. or this night, as in Matt. xxvi. 34. for it was now night; a natural day includes both night and day; a like way of speaking, see in Luke ii. 8, 11.

Before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me] As he did, *v.* 57, 58, 60. See the note on Matt. xxvi. 34.

35 ¶ And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.

He said to the disciples, as the Persic version reads, not to Peter only, but to them all:

When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes] Without the necessities of life, without proper accommodation for a journey, without provisions, or money to buy any with: so *אנו צאנרין*, "without a purse," is, by the scholiast on Aristophanes (*m*), interpreted by *אנו אגרוני ודאנאס*, "without money and expence." Christ here refers to his mission of them in Matt. x. 5, 9, 10.

Lacked ye any thing?] Any of the common blessings of life, food to eat, or raiment to wear?

And they said, Nothing] They lacked nothing at all; wherever they came they had friendly accommodations; they were provided with every thing necessary for them; they had both food and raiment, and good lodgings in every place; the houses and hearts of men were opened by Christ to receive them, though they were sent out by him so empty and destitute.

36 Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

That is, "Jesus said unto them," as the Persic version expresses it:

But now, he that hath a purse let him take it, and likewise his scrip] Signifying hereby, that from this time forward, immediately after his departure from them, after his death, resurrection, and ascension, when they should be sent into all the world to preach the Gospel, it would be otherwise with them than before; that they should be reduced to great penury and distress, should neither have food nor money to buy any with; and that they should suffer hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, and have no certain dwelling-place, as was their case; see 1 Cor. iv. 11. and that they would not be received and entertained in the manner they had been; and therefore it would be adviseable, if they had any provisions, to take them with them in their scrips, or if they had any money, to carry it with them in their purses; for glad would they be to provide themselves with necessities at any rate:

And he that hath no sword] The word *sword* is not in this clause, but in the next; it is only in the original, *he that hath not*; which, at first sight, looks as if the sense was, he that hath not a purse or a scrip, to sell and buy a sword with, let him sell his garment, and buy one: but, as De Dieu observes, the phrase, *he that hath not*, is the same with *he that has nothing*; who is a poor man, and has no money to buy a sword with, let him part with his garment, which rich men, who had money, had no need to do; though the Syriac, Persic, and Arabic versions put the word *sword*, in both clauses:

He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one] That is, if he could get one no other way. Christ here uses the common dialect of the nation, as Dr Lightfoot observes. So on the feast of dedication of the temple, "If a man had not any thing to eat, but what he had by alms, he must beg, or *מכר כסותו* "sell his garment," and "take oil and lamps, and light them (*n*)."
words

(m) In Avibus, p. 548.

(n) Maimon. Hilch. Megilla Vchanocha, c. 4. §. 12.

words of Christ are not to be understood literally, that he would have his disciples furnish themselves with swords at any rate, since he would never have said, as he afterwards does, that two were sufficient, which could not be enough for eleven men; or have forbid Peter the use of one, as he did in a very little time after this: but his meaning is, that wherever they came, and a door was opened for the preaching of the Gospel, they would have many adversaries, and these powerful, and would be used with great violence, and be followed with rage and persecution; so that they might seem to stand in need of swords to defend them: the phrase is expressive of the danger they would be exposed to, and of their need of protection; and therefore it was wrong in them to be disputing and quarrelling about superiority, or looking out for, and expecting temporal pomp and grandeur, when this would be their forlorn, destitute, and afflicted condition; and they would quickly see the affliction and distress begin in himself. In seven ancient copies of Beza's, it is read in the future tense, "he shall take, he shall sell, he shall buy."

37 For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.

Written in *Isaiab* liii. 12.

Must yet be accomplished] It having not been, as yet at least, so perfectly fulfilled.

And he was reckoned among the transgressors] The Syriac and Arabic versions read in the first person, "and I shall be reckoned," &c. and so the Persian version, "that I may be numbered," &c. and the Ethiopic renders it, "and the Lord Jesus is numbered with sinners;" neither right: for the words are a proper citation from *Isaiab* liii. 12. which, as the whole prophecy, belongs to the Messiah, was fulfilled in Jesus; who, though he was no transgressor, yet being in the likeness of sinful flesh, and dwelling among, and conversing with sinners, was traduced as one, and was joined with Barabbas, a murderer, a thief, and a robber, and put up with him for the people to choose which of the two they would have released; and was at last crucified between two thieves: and more than this, being in the law-place and stead of his people, and having their sins laid upon him, and imputed to him, he was made and accounted, by imputation, not only a sinner, but sin itself; and as such was considered in the eye of the law, and by the justice of God, and was treated accordingly; see the note on *Mark* xvi. 28.

For the things concerning me have an end] The Syriac version renders it, "all of them;" or, "the whole of it," as the Ethiopic version; all

that were concerning him; all the counsels, purposes, and decrees of God, relating to his sufferings and death; to the manner in which his death was brought about, by one of his disciples betraying him; to the several indignities he should be used with, by Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Jews, and Roman soldiers; and to his death itself; all which were by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and now were about to have, and quickly had their fulfilling end; as also all his own covenant-engagements, and agreements he entered into with his Father, to bear the sins of many, to make his soul an offering for sin, to be numbered with transgressors, and pour out his soul unto death; and likewise all the types and shadows of the law, all sacrifices in general, and the daily sacrifice in particular, with the passover, brazen serpent, and other things, even the whole law, both moral and ceremonial, had their full and final accomplishment in him; together with all the prophecies of the Old Testament relating to this matter, particularly *Gen.* iii. 15. *Psal.* xxii. 12—18. *Isai.* liii. 5—12. *Dan.* ix. 26. *Zach.* xii. 10. and chap. xiii. 6, 7.

38 And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

That is, "the disciples said, here are two swords;" as the Persian version expresses it; for they understood Christ's words literally; and two swords being among them, and which they might bring with them from Galilee, to defend themselves from thieves and robbers, which infested the roads between that country and Jerusalem; and one of these, as appears afterwards, belonged to Peter; they mention them with a desire of knowing whether they were sufficient, or whether they must provide themselves with more:

And he said unto them, It is enough] Or "they are sufficient," as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it; which must be understood, either ironically; yes, two swords, to be sure, are sufficient for eleven men, and against many and powerful enemies: or his meaning is, they were sufficient to answer his purpose, and be an emblem of what he designed by the sword: or this was a short way of speaking, suggesting their stupidity and ignorance; "it is enough, it is very well: I perceive you do not understand my meaning, and I shall say no more at present."

39 ¶ And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.

That is, "Christ came out," as the Persian version

fion; or "the Lord Jesus," as the Ethiopic version expresses it; he came out of the guest-chamber, or upper-room, and out of the house where he had been keeping the passover with his disciples; and he came out of the city of Jerusalem, to begin his sorrows and sufferings without the camp, where he was to end them:

And went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives] This had been his practice and custom for several nights past, as appears from chap. xxi. 37. Hence Judas knew the place he now went to, and could direct the soldiers and officers where to go and apprehend him; and this shews the willingness of Christ to be taken, in order to suffer and die; otherwise he would have gone to another place, and not this. The Ethiopic version adds, *to pray*, as he did; and, as very likely he was used; for he would sometimes continue a whole night in prayer on a mountain; see *Luke vi. 12.*

And his disciples also followed him] Eleven of them, for Judas was now gone to the chief priests to inform them where Christ was going, that they might seize him; but the other disciples followed him: which was so ordered, that they might be witnesses of his sorrows and agonies in the garden, and of his being betrayed by Judas, and apprehended by the Jews; though upon this they forsook him and fled.

40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

In the garden, at Gethsemane, which was at the foot of the mount of Olives;

He said unto them] "To the disciples," as the Perfic version reads;

Pray that ye enter not into temptation] This, according to the Evangelists, Matthew and Mark, was said to them after he had prayed the first time, and returned to the disciples, and found them sleeping; see the note on *Matthew xxvi. 41.*

41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,

That is, was withdrawn from the three disciples, Peter, James, and John, whom he took along with him, leaving the rest at some further distance; and from these he removed,

About a stone's cast] Fifty, or sixty feet from the place where they were;

And kneeled down and prayed] The following prayer;

42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

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Father, if it be consistent with thy will of saving sinners, and which thou hast declared to me, and I have undertook to perform: the other Evangelists say, *if it be possible*; see the note on *Matthew xxvi. 39.*

Remove this cup from me] Meaning, either his present sorrows and distress, or his approaching sufferings and death, which he had in view, or both:

Nevertheless not my will] As man, for Christ had an human will distinct from, though not contrary to his divine will:

But thine be done] Which Christ undertook, and came into this world to do; and it was his meat and drink to do it, and was the same with his own will, as the Son of God; see the notes on *Matthew xxvi. 39, 42.*

43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

Whether this was Michael the archangel, that appeared, as some have conjectured, or Gabriel, or what particular angel, is not for us to know, nor is it of any importance: it is certain, it was a good angel; "an angel of God," as the Ethiopic version reads; since he came from heaven, and was one of the angels of heaven, sent by God on this occasion; and it is clear also, that he was in a visible form, and was seen by Christ, since he is said to appear to him:

Strengthening him] Under his present distress, against the terrors of Satan, and the fears of death, by assuring him of the divine favour, as man, and of the fulfilment of the promises to him to stand by him, assist, strengthen, and carry him through what was before him; and by observing to him the glory and honour he should be crowned with, after his sufferings and death, and the complete salvation of his people, which would be obtained hereby, and which was the joy set before him; and which animated him, as man, to bear the cross, and despise the shame with a brave and heroic spirit. Now, though God the Father could have strengthened the human nature of Christ, without making use of an angel; and Christ could have strengthened it himself by his divine nature, to which it was united; but the human nature was to be brought into so low a condition, and to be left to itself, as to stand in need of the assistance of an angel: and this shews not only the ministration of angels to Christ, as man; but that he was at this present time made a little lower than the angels, who was the Creator and Lord of them; as he afterwards more apparently was, through the sufferings of death.

44 And being in an agony he prayed more

P p

earnestly:

earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

In an agony, or in a conflict and combat; that is, with the devil, who now appeared visibly to him, in an horrible form. After his temptations in the wilderness Satan left him for a season, till another opportunity should offer; and now it did; now the prince of this world came to him; see Luke iv. 13. John xiv. 30. and attacked him in a garden, where the first onset on human nature was made: and now began the battle between the two combatants, the serpent, and the seed of the woman; which issued in the destruction of Satan, and the recovery of mankind. The Arabic version leaves out this clause; and the Syriac version renders it, "being in fear;" and to the same purpose are the Persian and Ethiopic versions; that is, "of death;" and must be understood of a sinless fear of death in his human nature, to which death, being a dissolution of it, must be disagreeable; though not death barely considered, was the cause of this fear, distress, and agony he was in; but as it was to be inflicted on him for the sins of his people, which he bore, and as it was the curse of the law, and the effect of divine wrath and displeasure:

He prayed more earnestly] Repeating the words he had said before with great eagerness and importunity, with intenseness of mind, and fervor of spirit, with strong crying, and tears, to him that was able to save him from death, Heb. v. 7.

And his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground] This account of Christ's bloody sweat is only given by Luke; who being a physician, as is thought, more diligently recorded things which belonged to his profession to take cognizance of; nor should it be any objection to the truth and credibility of this fact, that it is not mentioned by the other Evangelists, since it is no unusual thing with them, for one to record that which is omitted by another; nor that this is wanting in some Greek and Latin copies, as (a) Jerom and Hilary (p) observe; since it was expunged, as is supposed, either by some orthodox persons, who weakly thought it might seem to favour the Arians, who denied that Christ was of the same impassible nature with the Father; or rather by the Armenians, or by a sect of men called Aphthartodocetæ, who asserted the human nature of Christ to be incorruptible: but certain it is, that it is in the most ancient and approved copies, and in all the Oriental versions, and therefore to be retained; to which may be added, that it is taken notice of, not to mention others, by those two early writers,

Justin Martyr (q), and Irenæus (r): nor should its being so strange and unusual a sweat at all discredit the history of it, since there have been instances of this kind arising from various causes; and if there had been none, since the case of our Lord was singular, it ought to be credited. This bloody sweat did not arise from a cachexy, or ill state of body, which has sometimes been the cause of it, as Aristotle observes, who says (s), that the blood sometimes becomes sanious, and so serous, insomuch that some have been covered with a bloody sweat: and in another place he says (t), that through an ill habit of body it has happened to some, that they have sweat a bloody excrement. Bartholinus produces instances in plagues and fevers (u); but nothing of this kind appears in Christ, whose body was hale and robust, free from distempers and diseases, as it was proper it should, in order to do the work and endure the sufferings he did; nor did it arise from any external heat, or a fatiguing journey. The above writer (x) relates, from Actuarius, a story of a young man that had little globes of blood upon his skin, by sweat, through the heat of the sun, and a laborious journey. Christ's walk from Jerusalem to the garden was but a short one; and it was in the night when he had this sweat, and a cold night too; see John xviii. 18. it rather arose from the agony in which he was, as before related: persons in an agony, or fit of trembling, sweat much, as Aristotle (y) observes; but to sweat blood is unusual. This might be occasioned by his vehement striving and wrestling with God in prayer, since the account follows immediately upon that; and might be owing to his strong cries, to the intenseness and fervor of his mind, and the commotion of the animal spirits which was now very great, as some have thought; or, as others, to the fear of death, as it was set before him in so dreadful a view, and attended with such horrible circumstances. Thuanus (z), a very grave and credible historian, reports of a governor of a certain garrison, who being by stratagem decoyed from thence, and taken captive, and threatened with an ignominious death, was so affected with it, that he sweat a bloody sweat all over his body. And the same author (a) relates of a young man of Florence, who being by the order of pope Sixtus the fifth condemned, as he was led along to be executed, through the vehemence of his grief discharged blood instead of sweat, all over his body: and Maldonate, upon this passage, reports, that he had heard it from some who saw

or

(p) Advers. Pelag. l. 2. fol. 96. F.

(q) De Trinitate, l. 10. p. 155.

(r) Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 332.

(s) De Hist. Animal. l. 3. c. 39.

(t) De Cruce Hypomnem. 4. p. 285, 286.

(u) Problem. 2. c. 26, 31.

(x) par. 1. l. 8. p. 804, 805.

(y) Adv. Hæres. l. 3. c. 32.

(z) De Part. Animal. l. 3. c. 5.

(a) Ibid. p. 184.

(b) Hist. sui Temporis.

(c) Ibid. par. 4. l. 32. p. 69.

or knew it, that at Paris a man, robust, and in good health, hearing that a capital sentence was pronounced upon him, was, at once, all over in a bloody sweat: which instances shew, that grief surprise, and fear, have sometimes had such an effect on men. But it was not mere fear of death, and trouble of mind concerning that, which thus wrought on our Lord; but the sense he had of the sins of his people, which were imputed to him, and the curse of the righteous law of God, which he endured, and especially the wrath of God, which was let into his soul. Though some have thought this was owing to the conflict Christ had with the old serpent the devil; who, as before observed, now appeared to him in a frightful form: and very remarkable is the passage which Dr Lightfoot, and others, have cited from Diodorus Siculus, who reports of a certain country, that there are serpents in it, by whose bites are procured very painful deaths, and that grievous pains seize the person bitten, and also a flow of sweat like blood. And other writers (b) make mention of a kind of asp, or serpent, called *hemorrhoids*; which, when it bites a man, causes him to sweat blood: and such a bloody sweat it should seem was occasioned by the bite of the old serpent Satan, now nibbling at Christ's heel, which was to be bruised by him: but of all the reasons and causes of this uncommon sweat, that of Clotzius is the most strange, that it should arise from the angels comforting and strengthening him, and from the cheerfulness and fortitude of his mind. This writer observes, that as fear and sorrow congeal the blood, alacrity and fortitude move it; and being moved, heat it, and drive it to the outward parts; and open a way for it through the pores: and this he thinks may be confirmed from the fruit and effect of Christ's prayer, which was very earnest, and was heard, as is said in *Heb. v. 7.* when he was delivered from fear; which deliverance produced joy, and this joy issued in the bloody sweat. Some think the words do not necessarily imply, that this sweat was blood, or that there was blood in it; only that his sweat, as it came out of his body, and fell on the ground, was so large, and thick, and viscous, that it looked like drops, or clots of blood: but the case rather seems to be this, that the pores of Christ's body were so opened, that along with sweat came out blood, which flowed from him very largely, and as it fell on the ground he being fallen on his face to the earth; it was so congealed by the cold in the night-season, that it became really, as the word signifies, clots of blood upon the earth. The Persic version, different from all others, reads, "his tears, like blood, fell by drops upon the ground." This agony and bloody sweat of Christ, prove the truth

of his human nature; the sweat shews that he had a true and real body, as other men; the anxiety of his mind, that he had a reasonable soul, capable of grief and sorrow, as human souls are; and they also prove his being made sin and a curse for us, and his sustaining our sins, and the wrath of God: nor could it be at all unsuitable to him, and unworthy of him, to sweat in this manner, whose blood was to be shed for the sins of his people, and who came by blood and water, and from whom both were to flow; signifying, that both sanctification and justification are from him.

45 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,

The Syriac version reads, "from his prayer," having finished it; and the Persic and Ethiopic versions read, "from the place of prayer," or where he prayed:

And was come to his disciples] To the three, which he had left about the distance of a stone's cast:

He found them sleeping for sorrow] On his account; for he had signified unto them how exceeding sorrowful he was; and they might perceive by his looks and gestures the anxiety and distress of mind he was in, which must needs affect them; and besides, he had given them some intimations of his being to be betrayed by one of them, and of his sufferings and death, and speedy departure from them; and because of these things, sorrow had filled their hearts, and this had induced heaviness and sleep upon them; see the note on *Matthew xxvi. 40.*

46 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

The Arabic version prefaces this with these words, "and he awaked them;" and then rebuked them for sleeping, adding,

Rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation] Together with the words recorded in *Matth. xxvi. 45, 46.*

47 ¶ And while he yet spake, Behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.

While he spake the above words to his disciples, Behold a multitude] The Persic version adds, "of Jews, with arrows, swords, and spears;" but the multitude consisted partly of Roman soldiers, and partly of the officers of the chief priests:

And he that was called Judas] And sometimes *Iscaiot*, to distinguish him from another Judas, who also was of the number of the apostles:

(b) Solin, Polyhistor, c. 40. Isidor, Hispalens, Etymolog. l. 12. c. 4.

One of the twelve] Disciples of Christ, whom he had chosen, called, and ordained :

Went before them] As their guide, to shew them where Jesus was, and to point him out unto them; see *Acts* i. 16.

And drew near unto Jesus to kiss him] That being the signal he had given them, by which they should know him. The Syriac version here adds, "for this sign he had given to them, Whomsoever I shall kiss, the same is he;" and so likewise the *Perfic* and *Ethiopic* versions, adding also this, "lay hold upon him;" but the whole seems to be transcribed from *Matt.* xxvi. 48.

48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?

Jesus said, calling him by his name, that he might know he knew him, and to aggravate his sin; "what, Judas, my apostle, my friend, my familiar friend, in whom I trusted, or with whom I trusted all my worldly affairs,"

Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?] Who assumed human nature for the good of mankind, who is the Messiah spoken of by the prophets, under the character of the Son of man, and who is holy, harmless, and never did any mortal man any hurt or injury; and what, betray such an one into the hands of his most implacable adversaries, and in such an hypocritical and deceitful way! All which Christ said, to shew he was no stranger to what he was about to do.

49 When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

They, that is, the eleven disciples that were about Christ, and with him in the garden;

Saw what would follow] That their Lord and Master was about to be betrayed by Judas, and would be seized, and carried away by the multitude that were with him:

They said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?] Or *swords*; as the *Syriac* and *Perfic* versions read; with the two swords which they had along with them. This they said, not being thoroughly acquainted with the mind of Christ in this matter, whether they should use the temporal sword or no; and might choose to shew this forwardness to stand by him, and defend him, remembering how lately they had said, that though they died with him, they would not deny him; and might, no doubt, be thoroughly exasperated and provoked to see Judas at the head of such a mob, with swords and staves, and burned with true zeal for their Lord and Master; and might

be the more spirited up to this, by observing, that the men fell backwards to the ground, upon Christ's saying that he was the person they sought; at least their dependence was upon the exertion of his almighty power; for they could never otherwise imagine that eleven men, with two swords only, would be able to defend him, and rescue him out of the hands of such a multitude.

50 ¶ And one of them smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.

The person that drew his sword, and performed this daring action of smiting the servant, not waiting for an answer from Christ, was Peter; and the high priest's servant, that he smote, was Malchus; both which we learn from *John* xviii. 10.

And cut off his right ear] He aimed, no doubt, at his head, but missing his blow, took off his right ear. It is very likely, that this servant was very busy and forward to lay hold on Christ, and shewed much virulence, and great malignity; and therefore Peter singled him out, and levelled his blow at him.

51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.

Jesus answered, not to the question of the disciples, but either to Peter, who had done this rash action; and so the *Perfic* and *Ethiopic* versions add, *to him*; or else to the multitude, *most* *honest*.

Suffer ye thus far] Or to them both; to Peter to stop his hand, to proceed no farther, but put up his sword; and so the *Arabic* version reads, "restrain thyself;" and to the multitude to be easy, and not revenge the affront that was given them; and in order to pacify them, "he went to the wounded man," as the *Perfic* version inserts.

And he touched his ear, and healed him] Which shews, that though the human nature of Christ was in a very low condition, yet he still retained the power of doing miracles; and also his great humanity, by which example he confirmed his precept of doing good to enemies; and likewise hereby gave full proof of his willingness to be apprehended by them; for otherwise, he that wrought such a miracle as this, could easily have delivered himself out of their hands; and one would have thought this would have put a stop to them, and have convinced them of the truth of his being a divine person, and the Messiah.

52 Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves?

After he had wrought this miracle, and had quieted the mob, and restrained them from falling upon the apostles, and cutting them to pieces, which in all likelihood they would otherwise have done; he addressed himself to the chief priests, who were members of the Jewish sanhedrim,

And captains of the temple] See the note on §. 4.

And the elders which were come to him] Which came along with Judas and the multitude, in order to see things done to their mind, and to animate both Judas, and the soldiers, and their officers, by their presence, lest they should come without him, as they had before done, *John vii. 45.*

Be ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves?] See the note on *Matthew xxvi. 55.*

53. When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.

Was daily with you; as he had been for some days past, teaching the people, and disputing with them, the chief priests, &c.

Ye stretched forth no hands against me] To lay hold upon him, and kill him; the reason was, because his time was not come, and they had no licence or permission to hurt him, or any power given them against him from above:

But this is your hour] The time was now come for the betraying of him by Judas; for the seizing and apprehending him by the Roman soldiers and officers; and for the delivery of him into the hands of the chief priests and elders; and for them to insult, mock, buffet, scourge him, and spit upon him: and for the crucifixion of him, and putting him to death: the hour fixed for this was now come; it was now, and not before, and therefore they could not lay hold on him, and do to him what they listed; but now they might: yet this was but an hour, a short time that they had to triumph over him, in Caiaphas's palace, and Pilate's hall, upon the cross, and in the grave: for on the third day he arose again, notwithstanding all the precautions they took, and is ascended to heaven, and is received there, and is out of their reach. And since then, it has been his hour to take vengeance on them; on their nation, city, and temple, for their disbelief, rejection, and ill usage of him; and it will be likewise his hour at the day of judgment, when they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn; and hide their faces from him, and call to the mountains to cover them; and when they will be punished with everlasting destruction from his presence: he adds,

And the power of darkness] The Persic version reads, "the power of your darkness;" that is,

either the power granted to them, who were darkness itself, born and brought up in darkness; were walking in darkness, and in the ignorance of their minds; and did works of darkness, and shunned the light, because their deeds were evil; and for which reason they now chose the night, to execute their black designs upon Christ: or rather, the power of the prince of darkness is here meant; that power which he usurped, and was now permitted him to exercise against Christ: and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "the power of the lord of darkness," who was once an angel of light, but now full of darkness; and who darkens the minds of men, and for whom blackness of darkness is reserved. The Jews were used to call the evil angels by this name; for so they say (c), "The destroying angels are called, *אנשי חשך*," "darkness, and thick darkness." The sense of the whole passage is, that now was the time come, that Christ should be delivered up into the hands of wicked men and devils; that the former should have him in their power, and triumph over him for a season; and that hell was now let loose, and all the infernal powers were about him, throwing their poisoned arrows and fiery darts at him; all which Christ endured, to deliver his people from the present evil world, from the wrath of God, the curses of the law, and from the powers of darkness.

54 ¶ Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off.

The band of soldiers, the captain, and the officers of the Jews, laid hold on Jesus, and bound him, *John xviii. 12.* and led him out of the garden; notwithstanding the miracle he had wrought, and the humanity he had shewn in healing the servant's ear; and notwithstanding his moving address to the chiefs of them: and indeed, this was a confirmation of his last words; for by this it appeared, that now was their time, and power was given to them, as the emissaries of Satan, to act against him:

And brought him into the high priest's house] Where the sanhedrim were assembled; but this was not in the temple where they used to sit: it is true indeed, that the chamber in the temple, called the chamber *parhedrin*, or *palhedrin*, was, *בית דין*, "the dwelling-house of the high priest," seven days before the day of atonement (d); and this was also called "the chamber of the counsel" (e); so that had the time of year agreed, it might

(c) Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Lev. fol. 37. 2. (d) T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 10. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Mezuza, c. 6. §. 6.

(e) T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 8. 2.

might have been thought that this was the place that Jesus was had to; but here the high priest did not usually dwell, and it is manifestly distinguished from his own house: for it is said (*f*), "Seven days before the day of atonement, they separate, or remove the high priest, מבידו "from his house," to the chamber of Palhedrin;" see the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 3.

And Peter followed afar off] See the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 58.

55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.

It being cold in the night-time, though it was at the passover, and the beginning of harvest, the servants and officers of the high priests made a fire in the middle of the hall, whilst Jesus was examining before the sanhedrim at the other end of it:

And were sat down together] About it, as the Syriac version adds, to warm themselves:

Peter sat down among them] For the same purpose, and as if he was one of them; and which he might do, not only to warm himself, but to prevent his being taken notice of, and suspected; as he might have been, had he been loitering about.

56 But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him.

A certain maid looked upon him, and took notice of him, and observed his countenance and gesture:

As he sat by the fire] Or light; see the note on *Mark* xiv. 54. and both by the light of the fire, and other lights, which were doubtless in the hall, she discovered something in him which made her look at him again with some earnestness:

And earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him] That fellow, that vile and contemptible wretch, now examining before the high priest; thus in a contemptuous manner, as was the custom and stile of that nation, she disdained to mention the name of Jesus; though the Perfic version here expresses it; and her sense was, that Peter was one of that clan, a disciple of his, and was only come hither as a spy.

57 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

Peter, startled at the maid's positive assertion, and knowing not how to clear himself any other way, roundly, and at once, denied that Jesus was his master; or that he was a disciple of his; or that he knew any thing of him, or had any acquaintance

with him: and thus he that had said he would die with him, rather than deny him, is frightened at a servant maid, and denies him upon the first attack upon him.

58 And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.

A quarter, or half an hour after, within an hour at least:

Another saw him] Not another maid, but another man, as appears from the answer; though the Syriac and Perfic versions leave out the word *man*, it may be because Matthew and Mark represent the person, on account of whose words Peter denied Christ a second time, to be another maid; but then it is to be observed, that that maid did not speak directly to Peter, as this person did, but to those that were present, or that stood by: and one of these taking the hint from her, looked at him,

And said, Thou art also of them] Of the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth; thou belongest to that company; thou art certainly one of his followers.

And Peter said, Man, I am not] This was after he had been out into the porch, and had mused upon it, and was come in again, but had not courage enough to withstand the temptation; and especially now, being attacked by a man; and so a second time denies that Christ was his master, or that he was a disciple of his.

59 And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilean.

One hour after the first assault, or rather after the second:

Another confidently affirmed] Who was one of them that stood by the fireside, and heard what had passed; and not only so, but was a kinsman to him whose ear Peter had cut off, and who had seen him in the garden with Christ, and therefore with all assurance asserted it, as a matter of fact, as an unquestionable truth, and beyond all doubt.

Saying, Of a truth, this fellow also was with him] A disciple and follower of Jesus, and was with him when he was apprehended: I saw him there, and it may be depended on as a truth; and then added this reason,

For he is a Galilean] You may be assured of this yourselves, his speech bewrays him; you may know him by his language, and which confirms my assertion.

60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.

Suggesting, that he was so far from being a follower of Jesus, or a disciple of his, and from having any personal acquaintance with him, that he did not know what he was talking of; or at least could not understand what he meant by this harangue, or by talking after this manner about him; and then began to curse and swear, and wish the most dreadful things to befall him, if he knew any thing of Jesus of Nazareth:

And immediately while he yet spake] In this shocking manner, with his mouth full of oaths, curses, and imprecations:

The cock crew] The second time, *Mark* xiv. 72.

61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

Jesus turned himself, his back being to Peter, whilst he was examining before the high priest; but he knew full well what was doing, what had been said to Peter, and how often he had denied him:

And looked upon Peter] With his bodily eyes, with great earnestness, expressing in his looks concern and pity for him; for it was a look, not of wrath and resentment, but of love and mercy, and power went along with it; it was not only a signal to Peter, to put him in remembrance of what he had said, but it was a melting look to him, and a means of convincing and humbling him, and of bringing him to repentance:

And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice] See the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 75.

62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

See the note on *Matthew* xxvi. 75.

63 ¶ And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote him.

That held Jesus whilst he was before the sanhedrim; and were either the Roman soldiers, or the servants of the high priest, who kept hold of him all the while, lest he should get away; though there was no reason for it; his time was come, nor would he escape out of their hands though he could easily have rescued himself:

Mocked him] Insulted him, and gave him very opprobrious language, and used him in a very scurrilous way, and even spit upon him;

And smote him] This clause is left out in the

Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions; the word used, signifies plucking off the skin; they pinched him, and tore off his flesh with their nails; they plucked the hairs of his beard, and the skin of his cheeks along with them, and so fulfilled *Isaiah* 1. 6.

64 And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee?

Or put a vail, or linen cloth over his eyes, as children do at play, to make themselves some sport with him:

They struck him on the face] On that part of it which was not covered, either with their hands, or with rods:

And asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee?] Hereby deriding his prophetic office, and using such language as children do at blind-man's-buff; see the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 68.

65 And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.

As blasphemously denying and ridiculing his Deity, and divine Sonship; mocking at, and burlesking his offices, of Prophet, Priest, and King; asserting him to be a mere man, and a very wicked one; a profane sinner, a glutton, and a winebibber; a sabbath-breaker, a blasphemer, and a seditious person; and one that had a devil, or dealt with familiar spirits: and thus *spake they against him*, his person, office, and character.

66 ¶ And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying,

See the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 1.

The elders of the people] Or, "the presbytery of the people," that were chosen from among the people to sit in the sanhedrim; the Israelites, as distinct from priests and Levites, and the doctors:

And the chief priests and the scribes came together] Which made up the great sanhedrim, or council of the nation:

And led him into their council] Or sanhedrim, the place where the sanhedrim sat, which was in the temple, and in the chamber called, *הבית* "the paved stone chamber (g); here they usually met, and so the Persic version renders it, "where their congregation was daily there."

67 Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe:

Art

(g) *Misna Sanhedrim*, c. 10. §. 2. & *Middot*, c. 5. §. 3.

Art thou the Messiah, promised and prophesied of by Moses, and all the prophets, and long expected by us?

Tell us] The Ethiopic version adds, *openly*; tell us frankly, freely, plainly, as in *John* x. 24.

And he said unto them, If I tell you, you will not believe] The Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, "will not believe me;" neither what he said, nor that he was the Messiah; they were determined not to believe in him, and receive him as such: their unbelief was wilful, obstinate, and invincible; they were proof against all arguments, evidence, and demonstration itself.

68 And if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go.

Or if I enter into a discourse on this subject, and require an answer to the arguments proving me to be the Messiah, or desire to know what objections can be made thereunto:

You will not answer me] Fairly and directly, or go into a serious and sober conversation on this head:

Nor let me go] Or dismiss me, though I should appear to be the Messiah, or ever so free from the charge of blasphemy and sedition; you are resolved, right or wrong, to detain me in bonds, and take away my life; so that it signifies nothing saying any thing to you.

69 Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.

The Son of man, meaning himself, who was truly man, and then in a low and mean form, and thought by the Jews to be a mere man; though this character was known by them to belong to the Messiah, especially what follows; as that he should

Sit on the right hand of the power of God] As he did after his resurrection and ascension; and which was manifest by the destruction of their nation, city, and temple; see the note on *Matt.* xxvi. 64.

70 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.

The whole sanhedrim said, with one voice, being greedy to lay hold on, and improve these words, that they might have something to lay to his charge:

Art thou then the Son of God?] For they knew that the Messiah, or the Son of man, that was to sit at the right hand of God, and come in the clouds of heaven, was the Son of God:

And he said unto them, Ye say that I am] Or rather the words may be rendered, *ye say it*, and *ye say right*; it is the very truth: *for I am*; that is, *the Son of God*, as the Ethiopic version here adds;

which sense agrees with *Mark* xiv. 62. and the following words seem to require this sense and version.

71 And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

That is, "the council," as the Persian version reads; some of the members of the sanhedrim, or the whole body of them; said,

What need we any further witness?] Or give any further trouble in getting witnesses, and hearing them:

For we ourselves have heard of his own mouth] His blasphemy, and what amounts to a sufficient charge of that kind; upon which they all pronounced him worthy of death, and determined to deliver him into the hands of Pilate the Roman governor, in order to pass sentence on him, and put him to death.

CHAPTER XXIII.

This chapter concludes Christ's sufferings and death.

He is accused before Pilate, and found guiltless, y. 1—6. He is sent to Herod, y. 7—10. Is mocked and sent back again, y. 11, 12. Pilate, at the importunity of the Jews, delivereth him to be crucified, and in his stead releaseth Barabbas, y. 13—25. They compel Simon of Cyrenia to bear his cross, y. 26. He is crucified between two thieves, and he prayeth for them: he is reviled on the cross, y. 27—37. The superscription on the cross, y. 38. One of the thieves reviles him, the other is converted, and comforted by him, y. 39—43. The death of Christ, and the prodigies that attended it, y. 44—49. His burial, y. 50—56.

AND the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate.

The multitude of the chief priests, scribes, and elders; the whole of the sanhedrim, excepting Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea, having in their court adjudged Christ to death:

Arose] From the council-chamber, where they sat in judgment upon him:

And led him unto Pilate] The Roman governor, and into the prætorium, or judgment-hall, where causes were tried by him; hither they brought Jesus, having bound him as a prisoner and a malefactor, that their sentence might be confirmed by the civil authority, and that he might be put to the death of the cross, which was a Roman punishment.

2 And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and

and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that he himself is Christ a king.

After they found that Pilate would not receive him as a malefactor upon their word, and delivery of him to him as such; but insisted on knowing what they had to charge him with, and what accusation they had to bring against him:

Saying, *We have found this fellow perverting the nation*] The nation of the Jews. Three of Beza's copies read, "our nation;" and so do the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions; and it is to be understood, either of his perverting the nation from the true doctrine of Moses and the prophets; by spreading among them new notions, and false principles of religion; whereby he was a troubler of God's Israel, as Ahab charged Elijah, 1 Kings xviii. 17. where the Septuagint use the same word as here; and so is a charge of heresy, or innovation in religion, against Christ: and thus Jesus stands charged in their writings (a); on those words in Psalm xci. 10. *Neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling*, they have this note; "That thou mayest not have a son, or a disciple, that corrupts his food publicly (that is, his doctrine); who departs from the true doctrine and worship; to heresy and idolatry, and propagates the same." נאמן יסו הנזיר as Jesus the Nazarene. Which last clause, in some later editions of the Talmud, is left out: for it may be understood of his perverting the nation in their politics, and so is a charge of sedition against him, as follows;

Forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar] Than which nothing was more false; see Matt. xxii. 21. and chapter xvii. 24—27. nor does what is after alleged, support this charge.

Saying, *That he himself is Christ a king*] Or Christ the king, or the king Christ; that is, he whom the Jews so frequently in their writings call, משיח המלך "the king Messiah;" for so he might be, and was, without any hurt to Cæsar's dignity or revenue; for though he was a king, yet not an earthly one; and though he had a kingdom, yet not of this world: indeed, they would insinuate by this, that he set himself up as an earthly king, in opposition to Cæsar, to draw off the people from him, and their allegiance and duty to him: and so the Jews say of Jesus of Nazareth, that he was put to death, and had no mercy shewn him, because he was, קרוב למלכות "near to the kingdom." (b) The whole of this charge was untrue; he was so far from perverting the nation with false doctrine and worship, that he taught the true doctrine, and right way of worship; and refuted

the false glosses of the Pharisees, and opposed the vain traditions of the elders, by which both were corrupted: and so far was he from any seditious principles and practices, or doing any injury to Tiberius Cæsar, the then reigning emperor, that he taught the people to give Cæsar, the things that were Cæsar's, and he himself paid the tribute-money; and when the people would have took him by force, and have made him a king, he avoided it by getting out of the way, John vi. 15.

3 And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the king of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it.

Pilate observing that it was said, he had given himself out to be a king; for as for what regarded religion, he took no notice of it, he put this question to him,

Art thou the king of the Jews?] That their prophecies speak of, and they have expected?

And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it] That is, Thou sayest well; it is as thou sayest, I am the king of the Jews. See the note on Matthew xxvii. 25. though he did not leave this without an explanation; without informing him what sort of a king he was, and what kind of a kingdom he had; see John xviii. 36, 37. which made Pilate perfectly easy, and desirous to release him, as appears by what follows.

4 Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man.

Pilate spoke both to the sanhedrim, and to the people that were gathered together about the governor's palace on this occasion; and who were standing without the judgment-hall, into which they would not enter, lest they should be defiled, and be unfit to eat the passover: wherefore Pilate came out to them; and this was the second time of his coming out to them, when he said the following words, John xviii. 28, 38.

I find no fault in this man] No cause, or reason, why any punishment should be inflicted on him, and especially he be put to death; no crime that can be fastened on him, or accusation proved against him, or any thing that amounts to a charge of sedition; the man is an harmless and innocent man, that has done nothing against Cæsar, or the government, and good of the nation; and therefore is not worthy of death, or of stripes, but should be discharged. This was Pilate's sense.

5 And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place,

(a) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 103. 1. & Berachy, fol. 27. 2.

(b) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 43. 1.

More fierce, or *urgent* to have him put to death; so the Hebrew word *pin* is rendered in *Exodus* xii. 33. which answers to that here used. "They cried out," as the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read; they were more clamorous and noisy; they cried out louder, and exerted themselves with greater fury and violence, and added strength to their clamour, and increased their charges:

Saying, He stirreth up the people] To sedition and rebellion:

Teaching throughout all Jewry] Or Judea; not in one, or a few places only, but every where:

Beginning from Galilee] Where indeed our Lord did begin his ministry, and where he chiefly taught; see *Matt.* iv. 12, 17, 23. and which they rather chose to mention, because the Galileans were reckoned a seditious people, and had been drawn into rebellion, and had suffered for it; see *Acts* v. 37. *Luke* xiii. 1.

To this place] To the city of Jerusalem, the metropolis of the nation. Suggesting, that he taught seditious principles, not only in Galilee, but all the way from thence throughout Judea, and even in their chief city; and had drawn many disciples after him every where; so that it was a notorious case, as well as of great consequence, and much danger, and ought not to be trifled with.

6 When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilean.

When Pilate heard "the name of Galilee," as the Syriac and Persic versions read: when that was mentioned,

He asked] The Ethiopic version says, "the Galileans;" some of which might be present, being come to the feast of the passover, and were very proper persons to enquire of,

Whether the man were a Galilean] So Jesus was reputed to be; for though he was born at Bethlehem of Judah, he was brought up at Nazareth in Galilee, where he spent the greater part of his private life, and his public ministry was chiefly exercised in those parts; hence the Jews thought that he came out of Galilee, and was a Galilean, *John* vii. 41, 52. and so he used to be called by Julian the apostate: and it seems, that the answer returned to Pilate was, that he was a Galilean; and so the Persic version adds, "and they said, yes;" for it follows,

7 And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time.

To the country which was under Herod's power,

and which he had the government of; for Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, *Luke* iii. 1. This was Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the great, and the same that beheaded John the Baptist; wherefore as soon as Pilate found that Jesus was one of his province, immediately

He sent him to Herod] To be examined, and to have his cause tried before him: and this he did, partly, that he might be rid of this troublesome business; and partly, that he might shew to Herod what a regard he had to his jurisdiction and power; and that he was unwilling to break in upon it, or usurp that to himself which did not belong to him: the way from Pilate's hall, to the place where Herod was, is computed by Adrichomius to be about three hundred and fifty steps:

Who himself was also at Jerusalem at that time] Or in those days; the days of the passover; for Herod being born a Jew, and the son of a proselyte, was come to Jerusalem, at this time, to keep the feast of the passover.

8 ¶ And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad; for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.

For though Jesus had been brought up in Herod's country, and had so frequently preached, and wrought miracles there, he had never seen him before; and to have a sight of him, was a great indulgence to his curiosity:

For he was desirous to see him of a long season] Perhaps ever since he had heard of his fame, and had entertained a notion that Christ was John the Baptist risen from the dead, whom he had beheaded; and therefore was desirous of seeing him, that he might know whether he was John or no:

Because he had heard many things of him] Concerning his doctrine and miracles, and especially the latter; how that he cast out devils, and healed all manner of diseases, and even raised the dead to life:

And he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him] Which would have still more gratified his curiosity, and have been the subject of further inquiry and conversation.

9 Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing.

Or he talked very much to him, inquiring who he was, whether John the Baptist, or no; whether it was true that he had wrought such miracles he had heard of, and how he wrought them, and by what power he performed them, and how he

came

came by it; and used many arguments to persuade him to work a miracle at that time:

But he answered him nothing] Would not give him one word in return to his many words, nor work any miracle in his presence; he answered him neither by words nor deeds; he would not indulge his curiosity, though he might have obtained his liberty by it.

10 And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him.

The sanhedrim, and those that followed him from Pilate's hall to Herod's palace; fearing, lest Herod should be disposed to let him go, should he gratify him by working a miracle:

Stood] Before Herod; so witnesses and accusers used to do; see the note on *Mark* xiv. 57.

And vehemently accused him] Of the same things they had accused him before Pilate, with great bitterness and constancy, increasing, and aggravating the charges against him.

11 And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.

Herod's captains and soldiers, his life-guards that attended his person, who came with him from Galilee, and were both for his security and service, and for his pomp and magnificence:

Set him at nought] Made nothing of him; had him in no account; treated him as a silly, and contemptible creature, that could not do any thing that was reported of him; nor able to say any thing for himself; but took him to be a mere fool and idiot; and so they used him:

And mocked him] As a king, and made sport and pastime with him:

And arrayed him in a gorgeous robe] The Vulgate Latin renders it, "a white robe;" a token of his innocence, though not so designed by them, but rather by way of derision, as a symbol of his simplicity and folly. The Syriac version renders it, *scarlet*; and the Arabic and Persic versions, *red*. It is very likely that it was an old worn-out robe of one of the officers, or soldiers, which they put on him; in contempt of his being a king, as the Roman soldiers afterwards did, upon the same account:

And sent him again to Pilate] Uncondemned, not knowing what to make of him, or the charge against him, and he might be unwilling to have any hand in his death, not having forgotten the case of John the Baptist; and therefore remits him to Pilate, to do as he thought fit with him.

12 ¶ And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves.

For it pleased Herod, that Pilate should shew such a regard to his authority and power, as to send one that belonged to his jurisdiction to take cognizance of his case; and especially as it was a person that was much talked of, and whom he had long wanted to see; and Pilate, on the other hand, was pleased with Herod, that though he was one that was under his jurisdiction, and so had a right of trying the cause, and either to absolve or condemn him, yet chose not to use this his power, but referred the case to the Roman governor:

For before they were at enmity between themselves] It may be on account of the Galileans, the subjects of Herod, whom Pilate had slain, whilst they were sacrificing at Jerusalem, *Luke* xiii. 1. which Herod might resent, as an infringement upon his authority and power; for had they been ever so deserving of punishment, it ought to have been left to him to have inflicted it, and not the governor of Judea, who had nothing to do with them: but now matters were made up by this step of Pilate's, in sending Christ to him, supposed to be a Galilean, and so of Herod's jurisdiction; which was tacitly acknowledging his former conduct to be wrong, and shewed a regard to Herod's authority: and thus they were reconciled together, and agreed in their contemptuous usage and ill treatment of Christ, and so fulfilled *Psalms* ii. 1, 2.

13 ¶ And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people,

That is, after Herod had sent back Christ unto Pilate, he then summoned the chief priests together, to consider what should be done to him:

And with them also the rulers and the people] Both the civil and ecclesiastical rulers, and the chief among the people, who had been forward in accusing Jesus, and seeking his death: the latter of these is not read in the Persic version; and both are joined together in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, and read thus; by the former, "the princes, or chiefs of the people;" and by the latter, "the judges of the people:" in a word, he convened the whole sanhedrim, which consisted of the chief priests, scribes, and elders of the people.

14 Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him:

Pilate said this, pointing to Jesus, who stood before him;

As one that perverteth the people] From their religion, and laws, and allegiance to Cæsar. The Syriac and Perfic versions read, "your people;" of the same nation with them, and that were under their care and jurisdiction; at least in an ecclesiastical way:

And behold, I having examined him before you] Not only privately, and alone, between themselves in the judgment-hall, *John* xviii. 33. and chapter xix. 9. but openly in the presence of them, when he brought forth Jesus to them, and heard their charges, and urged him to answer to them, *Matt.* xxvii. 11—14.

Have found no fault in this man] Cannot perceive any charge proved against him, or any crime he is guilty of, for which punishment should be inflicted on him; or at least, that he should be put to death:

Touching those things whereof ye accuse him] The Syriac and Perfic versions read, "all those things;" intimating, that he had carefully looked into, and examined every thing, and had omitted nothing, and that all their accusations and charges put together, did not make it appear that he was guilty of a single crime.

15 No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.

Herod was a Jew, and better versed in their religious affairs, and understood the nature of such charges, and the amount of them, and what was sufficient proof in such cases; and who had also examined Jesus, and that in their presence, and had heard all that they had to accuse him with, and yet found no fault in him of any such kind, as to adjudge him to death for it:

For I sent you to him] Along with Jesus, to make your allegations good against him before him; or, "I sent him to him;" as the Syriac version reads; that is, "Jesus to him," as the Perfic version expresses; he being of his country, and belonging to his jurisdiction; or, "he sent him back to us;" as the Arabic version reads, and three of Beza's copies: that is, Herod, after he had examined Jesus, and found no fault in him, sent him again to us; not being able to make out any crime against him, or to pass any judgment on the matter, for it follows;

And, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him] Or by him: the sense is, either that it appeared to Herod that Christ had done nothing that deserved death; or that nothing was done to him by Herod, which shewed, that he thought he was wor-

thy of it; since he passed no sentence on him, nor ordered him to be scourged, nor delivered him into the hands of an executioner, or to be imprisoned, till things could be cleared up.

16 I will therefore chastise him, and release him.

I will give him some correction, as by scourging, or beating with rods: this he proposed, not because he thought him deserving of it, but in complaisance to the Jews; since it would look as if their charges were not altogether weak and groundless, and that Jesus was not entirely innocent: this would carry a shew of guilt and punishment, and he hoped this might be thought sufficient, and so he should please them, and save Jesus from dying, which he much desired:

And release him] From his bonds, and let him go.

17 (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.)

And therefore he proposed to release Jesus

Unto them at the feast] Of passover, which now was; not that there was any law that obliged to it, but it having been customary with the Roman governor to do so, the people expected it; custom had made it necessary: and so the Syriac, Arabic and Perfic versions render it; "it was a custom to release," &c. not at each feast, or every feast, as the last of these versions read, only at the passover, as is expressed, *John* xviii. 39.

18 And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas:

The chief priests, rulers, and people, not bearing to hear of a release of him, now they had got him in their hands; and enraged at the proposal, in a most clamorous way, cried out as one man, immediately:

Saying, away with this man] To the cross; to Calvary, the place of execution; away with him out of the world; he is not fit to live:

And release unto us Barabbas] Whose character is given in the next verse; see the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 16.

19 (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.)

In the city of Jerusalem: where he had made an insurrection, in opposition to the government, in order to have thrown off the Roman yoke, and to have asserted and maintained their liberties, as a free people; or rather, to have seized and plundered the properties of other people, since he is represented elsewhere as a robber:

And

And for murder] Which had either been committed by himself, or his accomplices, in the insurrection; and for these things, sedition and murder, he

Was cast into prison] Where he lay till this feast, in order to be executed.

20 Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.

Pilate being more and more convinced of his innocence; and still seeing more clearly into the wickedness, malice, and envy of his accusers; and having received a message from his wife,

Spake again to them] Putting it again to them, which he should release; asking them what he should do with Jesus; plainly signifying his mind that he thought him innocent, and that it would be right to let him go. The Ethiopic version represents him, saying, "Will ye that I save for you, or release to you the Lord Jesus?"

21 But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him.

They were fierce and furious, more noisy and clamorous, the more they perceived Pilate was for saving him; and they were more desirous to have him crucified, and more impatient till it was done, as the repetition of the word shews.

22 And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go.

After Christ had been sent back to him from Herod; for he had declared before he had sent him to him, that he found no fault in him, *John xviii. 38.*

Why, what evil hath he done?] What capital crime has he committed? Is he guilty of murder? or sedition? or blasphemy? or robbery, or theft? or any other enormous crime?

I have found no cause of death in him] Why he should be put to death at all; and much less to this shameful and painful death of the cross, which was the punishment of slaves, and of the vilest of men, which they were desirous of:

I will therefore chastise him, and let him go] This he said, not as if he was determined to do it, whether they liked it, or no; but as signifying what he willed, or chose, and hoped they would be contented with, that he should be scourged, or beaten, and dismissed, as he at first proposed.

23 And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed.

They were urgent, and insisted upon his crucifixion, and pressed hard for it, and exerted their voices, and more loudly called:

Requiring that he might be crucified] Desiring it in the most importunate manner; signifying, that it must be, that nothing else would content them:

And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed] Upon Pilate to grant their request, contrary to the dictates of his own conscience, the conduct of Herod, and the message of his wife; the people being set on by the chief priests, and the chief priests joining with them, their numbers were so great, and their requests were pressed with so much force, and violence, and importunity, that Pilate could not withstand them.

24 And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required.

Pilate resolved, determined, and gave out, *That it should be as they required]* That they should have their request, what they asked for; namely, that Jesus should be crucified, and Barabbas released.

25 And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

He released unto them Barabbas, who is not named, as being a detestable person, and unworthy to be named; and is therefore described by the infamous, though just character of him, as follows:

That for sedition and murder was cast into prison] As in *1. 19.* whom they had desired to be granted to them, and released; see *Acts iii. 14.*

But he delivered Jesus to their will] To do as they would with him, to mock, and scourge, and crucify him.

26 ¶ And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.

As they led him from Pilate's hall, and out of the city of Jerusalem, towards Calvary, which was done by the Jews and Roman soldiers, after they had stripped him of his own clothes, and put on him a scarlet coat, and had platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and a reed in his hand, and bowed the knee, and mocked him, saluting him as king of the Jews; after they had finished their sport and pastime with him, and had put on him his own clothes again:

They laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian] Father of

of Alexander and Rufus, *Mark* xv. 21. see the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 32.

Coming out of the country] Either out of the country-part of Judæa, to the city of Jerusalem; or out of the field where he had been about rural business, and was now returning home, and perhaps knew nothing of the matter, what had been doing at Jerusalem:

And on him they laid the cross] On which Jesus was to be crucified, and which he was bearing himself; but finding that he was weak, and languid, and unable to carry it himself, and fearing, should he die by the way, they should be disappointed of glutting their malice, and seeing him in shame and agony on the cross, and of triumphing over him there; and being in haste for the execution of their malicious designs, they put the cross, at least one end of it, upon this man's shoulders:

That he might bear it after Jesus] Either the whole of it, following Jesus; or only one end of it, Jesus going before with the other end on his shoulder; which seems to be the order in which it was carried between them.

27 And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.

Not only a great company of the common people, but of the principal inhabitants of the city; for among these were the chief priests, scribes and elders: some went for one thing, and some another; some pitying, and others mocking at him, and all to see the melancholy sight, *ψ.* 48. as is usual at executions: and what might make the croud the greater, was the great number of people in the city, which were come from all parts to the pass-over; as also the same and character of the person, who was going to suffer:

And of women, which also bewailed and lamented him] Not that these were the same with the *presica* of the Romans, or the *ἐλπίστριαι* of the Grecians; for though the Jews had their *מחנות* "or mourning women," who were hired to assist in mourning, by using mournful gestures, tones, and songs, see *Jer.* ix. 17. yet public mourning was not allowed for persons that were executed as malefactors; and therefore it is the more remarkable, that here, and in *ψ.* 48. any public tokens of sorrow should be expressed: for, "those that are executed by the sanhedrim, *לפי ממשלתן* "they do not mourn for them;" but their near relations come and ask the peace of, or salute the witnesses, and they salute the judges, to shew, that they have not any thing in their hearts against them, seeing they have passed a true sentence; but though they do not use mourning, lo, they

"grieve for them; for there is no grief but in the heart (c)." The reason why they did not mourn was, because their ignominy and death atoned for their crime (d): but it seems, there was a difference between those that were put to death by the order of the Roman government, and those that were put to death by the sanhedrim: "All that are put to death by the government, although they are executed by the order of the king, and the law gives power to slay them, lo, *they mourn for them*;" and they do not restrain any thing from them, and their substance goes to the king, and they are buried in the sepulchres of their fathers: but all that are put to death by the sanhedrim, *they do not mourn for them*; but they grieve for them; for there is no grief but in the heart; and they are not buried with their fathers, till their flesh is consumed; and their substance goes to their heirs (e)." And since Christ was condemned to death by the Roman governor, hence it may be public mourning was allowed of, and might be done without notice; but these still were not the mourning-women, but persons that followed on their own accord: some expressed their concern and sorrow through a natural tenderness of spirit, and from a principle of humanity, being grieved that so useful and innocent a person as Christ appeared to be, should be put to such a cruel and shameful death; and others from a spirit of gratitude, they, or their friends, having received cures from him, being healed by him of sicknesses, or dispossessed of devils; and others from a spiritual, as well as natural affection for him; among whom were his own mother and his mother's sister, and Mary Magdalen, and other women that followed him out of Galilee.

28 But Jesus turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

These women being behind Christ, at the back of him; and he knowing who they were, and what they were doing, turns himself to them, and addressed them in the following manner: and

Said, Daughters of Jerusalem] Or ye Jerusalem women; just as the inhabitants of Jerusalem are called *daughters of Zion* in *Isaiah* iii. 16.

Weep not for me] Signifying, that they need not be under any concern on his account, for he was very willing to die; he desired nothing more; this was that he came into the world about; nor was he

(c) Maimon. *Hilch. Sanhedrim*, c. 13, §. 6. *Via Mifn. Sanhedrim*, c. 6, §. 4. (d) *Tuch. & Bartenora in Mifn. ibid.*
(e) Maimon. *Hilch. Ebel*, c. 1, §. 9.

he afraid to die; death was no king of terrors to him; he went to the cross with the greatest courage and intrepidity: besides, his sufferings, though he knew they would be very great and painful, yet that they would be soon over; nor could he be long held in the power of death, but would be raised again, and go to his Father, and be exalted at his right hand, and which should be matter of joy: to which might be added, that hereby his Father's counsels and covenant, purposes and promises, would have their accomplishment; the law would be fulfilled, justice satisfied, and all the perfections of God glorified, and the salvation of his chosen people effected; which, as it was the joy set before him, is a ground of rejoicing to believers: not that weeping on account of his sufferings and death was sinful; for he had offered prayers to God with cries and tears himself on this head; nor that it was altogether unreasonable, stupid, and preposterous; but Christ's meaning is, that when things were rightly considered, there would be great reason to allay their grief on this account, and rather express it on another;

But weep for yourselves, and for your children. Not themselves personally, but their nation and posterity; and either for sin, their own, and others; the sins of professors, and of the profane; particularly the sin of crucifying him, which would be more injurious to that people than to him, and do them more hurt than him, since they had imprecated his blood upon them and their children; or rather, and chiefly on account of those distresses and calamities that would come upon them, in a short time, for their rejection and crucifixion of him; on account of which he himself had wept over Jerusalem and its inhabitants, chapter xix. 41, 42.

29 For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, *Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.*

The time is hastening on; yet a little while, a few years more, and such times of distress will be:

In the which they shall say Or it shall be commonly said; it will be in every one's mouth:

Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck. That is, happy will those persons be who have no children, to be starved to death for want of bread; or to be killed with the sword before their eyes, which must greatly enhance their own miseries. Dr Hammond thinks, that one passage particularly is referred to, related by Josephus; that when Titus had so closely encompassed the city with a wall, that there was no coming out for provisions, upon

which a sore famine commenced, so that they fed on dung and dirt, and shoes, and girdles, one rich and noble woman, whose name was Mary, the daughter of Eleazar, being stripped of all she had by the seditious, killed her own child, and dressed it, and eat part of it; and the other part being found by the soldiers that broke in upon her, the news of this shocking fact was spread all over the city, and every one looked with horror upon it, and with the same compassion, as if they had done it themselves: and then might those words be said, *Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, &c.* who, though starving themselves, were under no temptation to do such a detestable action.

30 Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, *Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.*

The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions read, "then shall ye begin to say;" the tribulation being so great, as never was the like since the creation of the world, nor never will be to the end of it; and being so sore pressed with the sword and famine; with the enemy without, and divisions, robberies, and murders within; and their miseries being inexpressible, and intolerable, they will seek to go into the holes of the rocks, and caves of the earth, as is prophesied of them, *Isaiah ii. 19.* and as Josephus says, many of them did when the city was taken; and, like those in *Hosea x. 8.* will say to the mountains, *Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us;* will choose rather that the mountains and hills round about Jerusalem should fall upon them, and they be buried under the ruins of them, than live in such terrible distress, or fall into the hands of their enemies! Compare with this *Rev. vi. 15, 16.*

31 For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

Or it may be rendered impersonally, "if these things are done in a green tree;" by which is meant the Lord Jesus Christ, who is often compared to a tree, as to a green fir-tree, an apple-tree, a vine, and is called the tree of life: and may be said to be a moist or green tree; because, as a green tree is full of juice, so is he of grace and goodness; as that is flourishing, so was he in the fame of his doctrine and miracles, in the spread of his Gospel, and in the increase of his kingdom and interest; and as that is fruitful and useful, so was he in preaching the Gospel, and healing diseases; and as that is not proper to be cut down, nor fit fuel for the fire, so he was not deserving of death, or to be used in the manner he was; the metaphor seems designed to express the righteousness and innocence of Christ; see *Ezek. xx. 47.* and chap. xxiv. 4. who

was pure in his nature, without sin in his life, harmless in his conversation, and did no hurt to any man's person or property: his enemies could find nothing, nor prove any thing against him; nor even the devil himself, but owned him to be *the holy one of God*; and he was also declared innocent by his judge, the Roman governor: and yet how many hard, and grievous things, were done unto him! He was persecuted in his infancy, and his life was sought for; he was despised and reproached by men all his days; he was apprehended as if he had been a thief, and was bound as a malefactor; and arraigned at the bar of men, as if he had been the greatest criminal on earth: he was mocked, buffeted, and spit upon in the palace of the high priest; he was scourged by Pilate, and misused by his soldiers, who arrayed him with a scarlet robe, put a crown of thorns on his head, and a reed in his hand, and in a mock way bowed the knee to him, and saluted him as king of the Jews; they crucified him between two thieves, and as he hung on the cross mocked him, and gave him gall and vinegar to drink. To which may be added, that he was forsaken by his God and Father, and his wrath was poured out upon him, as he sustained the persons, and bore the sins of his people; the curse of the law was executed on him, and justice drew its sword, and sheathed it in him. And now if all these things were done to such an useful, holy, harmless, and innocent person,

What shall be done in the dry?] By whom wicked men are designed; who, as dry trees are without juice, so are such men destitute of grace and righteousness, and all that is good, and bring forth no fruit, neither to God, nor themselves, nor others; but, like dead and withered trees, are dead in trespasses and sins, and full of all manner of sin, and rottenness, and impurity; and are deserving to be cut down, and are fit fuel for the fire of divine wrath and displeasure, both in this, and in the other world. The wicked Jews, that rejected Christ, and crucified him, are particularly meant; and if such evil things were done by them to so just a person, what may not be expected will fall on them in retaliation for such usage? And if the Roman soldiers, under their encouragement, acted such a part to Christ, who had never done them any injury, what will they not do to these men, when provoked by their insults and rebellions? And if such things were done to Christ by his Father, according to the requirement of the law, and the strictness of divine justice, when he was made sin for his people, though he knew none, nor committed any himself, what vengeance will fall on them, who must answer for their sins in their own persons? What devouring flames, and everlasting

burnings, will such dry trees be exposed to, as being fit for them, and deserving of them? So the children of men are, by the Jews, in their writings, called, יְדֵי יָבֵשׁ "dry trees (f)"; the Targumist on *Ezek. xvii. 24.* paraphrases the words thus; "I have humbled the kingdom of the nations, which was strong as a green tree, and I have strengthened the kingdom of the house of Israel, which was weak as a dry tree." It is a common proverb with the Jews (g); "Two dry sticks, or brands, and one green, the dry burn up the green:" intimating, that a few righteous persons among wicked men, suffer with them; but if righteous men suffer, how much more the wicked? See *1 Pet. iv. 17, 18.*

32 ¶ And there were also two other malefactors led with him to be put to death.

Not that Christ was one malefactor, though indeed he was looked upon and treated as one by the Jews; but as the words may be read, *there were also two others that were malefactors*; really such, two thieves, who had been guilty of theft and robbery, and were condemned to die: and these were

Led with him] For the greater ignominy and reproach of Christ, that it might be thought he was equally a malefactor, and as deserving of death as they.

To be put to death] The death of the cross, which was the death the Romans put slaves, thieves, and robbers, and the worst and basest of men to.

33 And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

Called Calvary, or Cranion; which signifies *a skull*; so called from the skulls of persons that lay about, who were executed. It is a tradition of the ancients (h), that Adam was buried in this place where Christ was crucified, and that his skull lay here. It was usual to crucify on high places, and on mountains, such an one as this (i) was:

There they crucified him, and the two malefactors] The two thieves;

One on the right hand, and the other on the left] And so fulfilled the prophecy in *Isaiah liii. 12.*

34 ¶ Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.

And

(f) Zohar in Lev. fol. 14. 2.

(g) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 93. 1.

(h) Cyprian de Resurrectione Christi, p. 479. Hieron. tom. 1, fol. 42.

Bar Bihli apud Castell. Lex. Polyglott. col. 3466.

(i) Lapidus de Cruce, l. 3. c. 13.

And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

When he was crucified between the two thieves, and as he hung upon the cross, and while insulted and abused by all sorts of men, and put to the greatest pain and torture, he addressed himself to God his Father, to forgive them: the Arabic version reads, "my Father," who was so to him, not as he was man, for as such he had no Father; but as he was God, being, as a divine person, his beloved, and only-begotten Son: and this he uses, whilst, as man, he is praying to him; partly to express his faith of relation to him, his confidence of being heard; and partly to set believers an example of praying, as he has directed, saying, *Our Father*. And the petition put up by him is for forgiveness; which is with God, and with him only; and that for his enemies, his crucifiers; not for those who sinned the sin unto death, the sin against the holy Ghost, who knowing him to be the Messiah, maliciously crucified him, for whom prayer is not to be made; but for those who were ignorantly concerned in it, as the next clause shews, even for his own elect, whom the Father had given him out of the world, which were among his crucifiers; for those, and not the world, he prays; and the fruit of this his prayer quickly appeared, in the conversion of three thousand of them under Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, next following, in six weeks time. Though such might be his affection, as man, in general, as to wish for, and desire, as such, was it consistent with the divine will, forgiveness for all of them; adding,

For they know not what they do. Or *are doing*: meaning, in crucifying him, which was the case of many of them, and of their rulers; they did not know that Jesus was the Messiah, nor the prophecies concerning him, nor the evil they were committing in putting him to death; not that their ignorance excused their sin; nor was it without sin; nor does Christ use it as a plea for pardon, or found his intercession upon it, which is always done upon his own propitiatory sacrifice; but this is mentioned as descriptive of the persons Christ prays for, and points out a branch of his priestly office he exercises, in having compassion on the ignorant, and them that are out of the way.

And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. That is, upon his vesture, or seamless coat, and so fulfilled the prophecy in *Psaln* xxii. 18. see the notes on *Matt.* xxvii. 35, and *John* xix. 23, 24.

35 ¶ And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

The people beheld this dismal and affecting sight,

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insulting and reviling him, and wagging their heads at him, as did also those that passed by.

And the rulers also with them derided him. The chief priests, scribes, and elders, the members of the sanhedrim, whose characters should have restrained them from such an inhuman conduct. The phrase *with them*, is wanting in the Oriental versions, and in one of Beza's copies:

Saying, He saved others. By healing their diseases, or raising them from the dead:

Let him save himself. From death, by unnailling himself, and coming down from the cross; see the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 42.

If he be Christ. The Messiah, he and his followers give out he is; even *the chosen of God*, referring to *Isaiah* xlii. 1. The Arabic version reads, "the chosen Son of God;" very wrongly; for Christ was not chosen to be the Son of God; he was so by nature; but he was chosen to be a servant, as the text cited shews, to be a Mediator between God and man, and the Saviour of his people.

36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar.

The Roman soldiers, to whom the execution was committed, who crucified him, and parted his garments, and stood at his cross watching; these joined in the insult, which is not to be wondered at:

Coming to him, and offering him vinegar. Which was usually a part of their allowance, and was their drink; see the note on *John* xix. 29.

37 And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.

Or their Messiah, who was spoken of as a divine person; for otherwise he might have been their king, and not have been able to have done what is proposed:

Save thyself. Or deliver thyself from the cross.

38 And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Containing the crime he was charged with, and accused of; see the note on *Matthew* xxvii. 37, and *John* xix. 19, 20.

39 ¶ And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

Which were hanged on the cross, one of the thieves crucified with Christ; the Oriental versions add, *with him*: according to the Evangelists Matthew and Mark, both of them reviled him, and threw the same things in his teeth as the priests,

R r

people,

people, and soldiers did; which, how it may be, reconciled, see the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 44.

Railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.] Taking up the words of the rulers, and adding to them, perhaps, with a design to curry favour with them, hoping thereby to get a release; or, however, shewing the wickedness and malice of his heart, which the sufferings and punishment he now endured could make no alteration in; see *Rev.* xvi. 9.

40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

That is, the other malefactor made answer to him, and reproved him for his baseness and wickedness:

Saying, Dost not thou fear God?] Or, neither dost thou fear God, any more than these priests, people, and soldiers, that are acting such a barbarous and inhuman part to a man in misery? and wilt thou do the same, and shew that thou art an impious wretch, now thou art just going out of the world, and neither fearest God, nor regardest man, and art without compassion to a fellow-sufferer, adding sin to sin?

Seeing thou art in the same condemnation?] Undergoing the same sort of punishment, though not on the same account, which might be the reason why they suffered on the same day: for the Jews say (t), they never judge (or condemn) two in one day, but one to-day, and the other to-morrow: but if they are in one transgression, "one death," as an adulterer with an adulteress, "they condemn them both in one day; but if the adulterer lies with a priest's daughter, seeing he is to be strangled, and she to be burnt, they do not execute them both in one day."

41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

Suffering justly for sins committed against the law; our sentence is just, we are righteously punished: which shews that he had a true sense of sin; for where that is, there will be not only an acknowledgment of the offence, but a vindication of the justice of God, should he proceed to deal according to the demerit of sin.

For we receive the due reward of our deeds.] Though, according to the law of Moses, theft was not punishable with death, but with a restoration, either double, or fourfold, or fivefold, according to the

nature of it; see *Exod.* xxii. 1, 4. It may be these men had committed murder along with the robbery:

But this man hath done nothing amiss.] Or bad, unreasonable, wicked, and detestable: he did no injury to God, or man; wronged no man's person or property; did all things well; obeyed the law of God perfectly, and always did the things which were pleasing to God. Thus, from the mouth of one of the malefactors Christ suffered with was he declared innocent; when the Jews designed, by crucifying him with them, to have led the people to have believed that he suffered for a crime equal, or superior to theirs.

42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

Acknowledging Jesus to be the Messiah, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; the Lord of all, and especially of his church and people, and his own Lord. So the Syriac and Persic versions read, *my Lord*: however, he said this by the Spirit of God, who enlightened his understanding and wrought faith in him to believe in Christ; see *1 Cor.* xii. 3.

Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.] Or rather, *in thy kingdom*, as in *Matt.* xvi. 28. for this man had not only faith in the kingdom of Christ, as being of a spiritual nature, and not of this world, and not coming with outward pomp and observation; in which respect his faith exceeded that of the apostles themselves, who were looking for, and expecting a temporal kingdom; and he not only was without all doubt or scruple about Christ's entering into his kingdom and glory after death; but he had knowledge of, and faith in his second coming, when his glorious kingdom should appear, or his kingdom appear in glory; and when he desired he might be remembered by him, have favour shown him, and he share in the glories and happiness of it. This was great faith indeed, to be exercised on Christ at such a time as this, when he was under the greatest reproach and ignominy; while he was insulted and derided by all sorts of people; and when he was forsaken by his own apostles, and was suffering a shameful punishment, and now dying.

43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

Jesus immediately answered him, though he said not one word to the other that railed at him, or to the multitude that abused him; and promised him more than he asked for, and sooner than he expected.

Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.] In the garden of Eden; not

(t) Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrim, c. 14. §. 19.

not the earthly paradise, nor the church militant, but the future place, and state of the happiness of the saints, even heaven and eternal glory, which the Jews frequently call by this name: see the note on 2 Cor. xii. 4. and is so called, because, as the earthly paradise, or Eden's garden, was of God's planting, so is the heavenly glory of his providing and preparing: as that was a place of delight and pleasure, so here are pleasures for evermore: as there was a river in it, which added to the delightfulness and advantage of it, so here runs the river of God's love, the streams whereof make glad the saints now, and will be a broad river to swim in to all eternity: as there was the tree of life, with a variety of other trees, both for delight and profit; so here, besides Christ, the tree of life, which stands in the midst of it, are an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect: and as the inhabitants of that garden were pure and innocent creatures, so into this paradise shall nothing enter but what is righteous, pure, and holy: and whereas the principal enjoyment of man in Eden was conversation with God, and communion with him, the glory of the heavenly paradise will lie in fellowship with God, Father, Son, and Spirit, in beholding the face of God, and seeing him as he is. And this is the happiness promised by Christ to the penitent and believing thief, that he should be here; and not only so, but with him here, which is far better than being in this world, and than which nothing can be more desirable; and which, when enjoyed, will be for ever: and this he was to enter upon that very day; which shews, that Christ's soul did not descend into hell, locally and literally considered, or into the *limbus patrum*, the Papists talk of, to fetch the souls of the patriarchs thence; but as soon as it was separated from the body was taken up into heaven; and also, that the souls of departed saints are immediately, upon their separation from the body, there; which was the case of this wonderful instance of the grace of God; and shews the swiftness of the soul, or the velocity of angels in conveying it thither immediately: and this agrees with the sense of the Jews, who say (1), that "The souls of the fathers, or patriarchs, have rest, and in a moment, immediately enter into their separate places, or apartments, and not as the rest of the souls; of whom it is said, all the twelve months the soul ascends and descends, (goes to and fro) but the souls of the fathers, מִי בְּהֵרֵן immediately, upon their separation, return to God that gave them." Some would remove the stop, and place in after to-day, and read the words thus, *I lay unto thee to-day*; as if Christ only signified the time when he

said this, and not when the thief should be with him in paradise; which, besides its being senseless and impertinent, and only contrived to serve an hypothesis, is not agreeable to Christ's usual way of speaking, and is contrary to all copies and versions. Moreover, in one of Beza's exemplars it is read, "I lay unto thee, *in omni tempore*," that is, "thou shalt be with me," &c. and so the Peric and Ethiopic versions seem to read, which destroys this silly criticism. And because this was a matter of great importance, and an instance of amazing grace, that so vile a sinner, one of the chief of sinners, should immediately enter into the kingdom of God, and enjoy uninterrupted and everlasting communion with him; and that it might not be a matter of doubt with him, or others, Christ, who is the amen, the faithful witness, and truth itself, prefaces it after this manner: *verily I say unto thee*; it is truth, it may be depended on. This instance of grace stands on record, not to cherish sloth, indolence, security and presumption, but to encourage faith and hope in sensible sinners, in their last moments, and prevent despair. The Papists pretend to know this man's name; they say his name was *Disma*; and reckon him as a martyr, and have put him in the catalogue of saints, and fixed him on the twenty-fifth of March.

44 ¶ And it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.

Or twelve o'clock at noon; and so the Ethiopic version, "when it was noon;" see the note on Matt. xxvii. 45.

45 And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.

There was an eclipse of the sun, which was preternatural, it being now full moon, and lasted three hours, and so total as to darken the whole earth; and now was the prophecy in *Amos viii. 9* literally fulfilled:

And the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. The Peric version renders it, "the gate of the temple;" and so the Syriac version, "the face of the gate of the temple;" see the note on Matt. xxvii. 51.

46 ¶ And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the Ghost.

He cried aloud a second time; for at the first loud cry he uttered these words, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*; and at the second what follows, see Matt. xxvii. 46, 50, and the notes there.

He said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit] Not the holy Spirit, nor his divine nature, but his human soul: for that he had a reasonable soul, as well as a true body, is certain; from his having an human understanding, will, and affections, ascribed to him; and indeed, without this, he would not have been a perfect man, nor like unto us; and could not have been tempted, bore sorrows and griefs, and endured the wrath of God; nor could he have been a Saviour of souls: now just as he was expiring, as he *made his soul an offering for sin*, and which he offered unto God, he committed it to his divine care and protection; and to enjoy his presence, during its separation from his body, using the words of the psalmist in *Psal. xxxi. 5.* and this shews, that his spirit, or soul, belonged to God, the Father of spirits, and now *returned to him that gave it*; that it was immortal, and died not with the body, and was capable of existing in a separate state from it, and went immediately to heaven; all which is true of the souls of all believers in Christ; and what the dying head did, dying members may, and should, even commit their souls into the same hands:

And having said thus, he gave up the ghost] Breathed out his soul, dismissed his spirit, laid down his life, freely and voluntarily; and which no man, or devil, otherwise could have taken away from him.

47 ¶ Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.

When he saw the eclipse of the sun, the darkness upon the land, the earthquake, the rocks rent, and Jesus expire in so uncommon a manner:

He glorified God] By confessing that Christ was the Son of God, and declaring him an innocent person:

Saying, Certainly this was a righteous man] Clear of the charges exhibited against him; and has suffered wrongfully; and this he concluded from those unusual appearances, and which he considered as tokens of divine resentment.

48 And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned.

Came together to see the execution of Jesus; and some of them might be his inveterate enemies, and came to insult him, and did insult him; many of these, though not every individual of them,

Beholding the things which were done] The eclipse, earthquake, &c.

Smote their breasts] As conscious of guilt, and as fearing some dreadful judgment would fall upon

them and their nation for this sin of crucifying Christ. The Persian version reads, "they went back, and kneeled down, and prostrated themselves to the ground;" as being in the utmost astonishment, confusion, fear, and dread.

And returned] To the city, and to their own houses, where they might more seriously, and with the greater compulsion of mind, reflect on these things.

49 And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.

All that were related to him in a natural, or in a spiritual sense, or both; as his own mother, and beloved disciple John, who were both present, *John. xix. 26.* or those that were known unto him, and familiar with him, who attended on his ministry, and often conversed, and were intimately acquainted with him.

And the women that followed him from Galilee] Among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and Salome the mother of Zebedee's children:

Stood afar off] From the cross:

Beholding these things] With wonder, as well as looking upon their dear suffering Lord, with aking hearts and flowing eyes.

50 ¶ And behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man, and a just:

See the note on *Matthew xxvii. 57.*

A counsellor] Mark says, he was an *honourable* one; he was either one of the council of the high priest, or a member of the great sanhedrim; see the note on *Mark. x. 43.* and he was

A good man, and a just] He was kind and beneficent in his temper, and just and righteous in his life and actions: a like character is given of Joseph the husband of Mary, the mother of our Lord, *Matt. i. 19.*

51 (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.

Though he was with the Jews, the chief priests, scribes, and elders, in the high priest's palace, being one of that great council; yet he did not agree with them; nor was it his advice and counsel that they should put Christ to death; he was against it, at least did not consent to it: he was

Of Arimathea, a city of the Jews] See the note on *Matt. xxvii. 57.* This clause in the Syriac

and

and Persic versions stands in the preceding verse, and follows after the mention of his name and office, and where it seems most natural;

Who also himself waited for the kingdom of God] See the note on Mark xv. 43.

52 This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.

Mark says, he went boldly to him; see the note on Mark xv. 43.

And begged the body of Jesus] Knowing he was dead; "that he might bury it," as the Ethiopic version adds, and prevent its being interred with the two malefactors, or abused by the mob.

53 And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

Took it down from the cross, with the help of others, having obtained leave of Pilate so to do.

And wrapped it in linen] As was the custom of the Jews, in burying their dead; see the note on Matt. xxvii. 59.

And laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone] Cut out of a rock; see the note on Matt. xxvii. 60.

Wherein never man before was laid] So that it could not be said it was another body, and not that of Christ's, that was raised from the dead. This circumstance serves to confirm the truth of his resurrection.

54 And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on.

The preparation both for the sabbath, and for the Chagigah, or grand festival, which they kept on the fifteenth day of the month, in a very pompous manner; so that the day following was an high day;

And the sabbath drew on] Or *shabbat*; which is so said, though it was evening, on account of the lights, which were every where, in every house, lighted up at this time, and which they were, by their traditions, obliged to for so run their canons (n); "Three things a man is obliged to say in the midst of his house, on the evening of the sabbath, when it is near dark. Have ye tithed? Have ye mixed? (that is, the borders of the sabbath, the courts and food) *וְהוֹרֵא לְפָנֶיךָ אֶת הַמִּצְוָה* light the lamp." This was what could by no means be dispensed with; for so they say (n), "The lighting of the lamp on the sabbath is not in a man's power, (on at his liberty,) if he pleases he may light, and if not, he may not

light.—But it is what he is obliged to, and every man and woman are bound to have in their houses a lamp lighted up on the sabbath; and though he has nothing to eat, he must beg, and get oil, and light a lamp; for this is included in the duty of the sabbath.—And he that lights, ought to light within the day, before the setting of the sun." So that when these lamps were every where lighting, before the sun was set, and the sabbath properly come, it might be said to draw on, or to be shining forth. Besides, it was usual to call the evening of any day by the name of *light*: thus it is said (o), "וְהָיָה עֶרְבָא דְּמִלְכָּא" (that is, the night) of the fourteenth, (of the month Nisan) they search for leaven," &c. So that the Evangelist might, very agreeably to the way of speaking with the Jews, say, that the sabbath was enlightening, or growing light, though the evening was coming on.

55 ¶ And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid.

See the note on v. 49.

Followed after] Joseph, and those that were with him, when they carried the body of Jesus, in order to inter it.

And beheld the sepulchre] Took notice of it, what an one it was, whereabouts it stood in the garden, that they might know, and find it again:

And how his body was laid] In what position, form, and order; and observed that it was only wrapped in linen, and not anointed, or embalmed.

56 And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath-day according to the commandment.

They returned to the city, and to their own houses, or to some one of them:

And prepared spices and ointments] For the anointing, and embalming the body of Christ, called by the Jews "the spices of the dead;" see the note on Mark xvi. 1.

And rested the sabbath-day according to the commandment] In Exodus xx. 8—11. not knowing as yet the abolition of it, with the rest of the ceremonial law; and therefore, though they had bought and prepared the spices and ointments, they did not carry them to the sepulchre to anoint the body with them, till the sabbath was over; for this was forbidden to be done on a sabbath-day. It is asked (p),

"What

(m) Misn. Sabbat, c. 2, §. 5.

(n) Maimon. Hileh Sabbat, c. 5, §. 7.

(o) Misn. Sabbat, c. 2, §. 5.

(p) Misn. Sabbat, c. 2, §. 5.

(q) T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 12, 2.

"What is that thing that is lawful to be done to a living man, and is forbidden a dead man? It is said, *אין* "this is anointing." Though elsewhere (q) this is allowed of; for so runs one of their traditions; they do all things necessary for the dead, (that is, on a sabbath-day) *אין* "they anoint," and wash him, only they may not move a limb of him." But how he could be anointed and washed, without a limb being moved, is not very easy to say, as his foot, or hand, or eye-brows, which are the parts one of their commentators instances in (r).

CHAPTER XXIV.

In this chapter is related the resurrection of Christ, revealed first to Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, by two angels, *q. 1-8*. They tell the apostles, but they believe them not, *q. 9-12*. Christ sheweth himself to two of his disciples, in their journey to Emmaus, and is known in breaking of bread, *q. 13-22*. They return to Jerusalem, and acquaint the other disciples therewith, *q. 23-35*. Christ appearing to all his disciples, sheweth them his hands and his feet, and eateth in their presence, *q. 36-42*. Explaineth the scripture to them, and promiseth his Spirit to comfort them, *q. 44-49*. Having blessed, and taken his leave of them, he ascendeth up into heaven, *q. 50-53*.

NOW upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.

On which day it appears, by what follows, Christ rose from the dead, and which was the third day from his death, and so verified the scriptures, and his own predictions:

Very early in the morning] Just as light began to spring, the day to dawn, and break; the first appearance of the morning; when it first began to dawn;

When it was yet dark] As in *John* xx. 1. and so read the Syriac and Persic versions here; and the Ethiopic version, "while it was yet night." This must be understood of the time when the women set out from the city, or suburbs; for by that time they got to the sepulchre it was sun-rising, *Mark* xvi. 2. and shews their great love, zeal, and devotion for Christ, and great courage and fearlessness to go out of the city at such a time, without any man with them, and to a grave:

They came unto the sepulchre] Where Christ was laid; that is, the women who came with Christ

from Galilee, and who had observed where, and how his body was interred:

Bringing the spices which they had prepared] On the sabbath eve, to anoint the body, but were prevented by reason of the sabbath; see chapter xxiii. ver. 56.

And certain others with them] [That is, other women; besides Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of Joses, and Salome, and other Galilean women, there were other Jerusalem women, or of Bethany, it may be Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, and of the parts adjacent: this clause is left out in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, and in one ancient copy of Beza's; but is retained in the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions.

2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

The stone which Joseph had laid there for the security of the body, and in the sight of these women; and which gave them a concern, as they went along, seeing they were all women, who should roll away the stone for them, *Mark* xvi. 3. but when they came to the sepulchre, to their great surprise, they found it rolled away, which was done by an angel, *Matt.* xxviii. 2.

3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

They entered into the sepulchre; being invited, encouraged, and led on by the angel that sat upon the stone; for the Jews sepulchres were built large enough for persons to go into; see the note on *Mark* xvi. 5.

And found not the body of the Lord Jesus] As they expected, having seen him put there, and had observed in what cave in the sepulchre, and in what form he was laid.

4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:

They were much perplexed about the body of Christ, and its being gone, what should become of it, whither it was removed, and by what means; and by whom; whether by a friend or foe: for they had no thought, nor expectation of a resurrection:

Behold, two men stood by them in shining garments] Who were angels in the form of men; and as these were the first witnesses of Christ's resurrection, there were two of them; for by the mouth of two or three witnesses every thing is established. *Matth.* and *Mark* take notice but of one; but *John* makes mention of two, as here, seen by Mary Magdalene, though in a different posture; they were

(q) *Misn. Sabbat*, c. 23. §. 5.

(r) *Bartenora* in *ibid*.

were sitting, the one at the head, the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain; but when the rest of the women came, they were risen up, and stood close by them, on a sudden, at an unawares, being arrayed in white raiment, as white as snow, as a token of their purity and innocence, and as bringers of good tidings; and as joining in the triumph of their Lord's resurrection: their garments were bright and glittering like lightening, to set forth the glory and majesty of these celestial spirits, and that they might be known to be what they were.

5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

That is, the women were afraid of these angels; these bright appearances and majestic forms, as it was usual for good men and women to be, as appears from the cases of Zacharias, the virgin Mary, and others:

And bowed down their faces to the earth] Through great fear and reverence of these heavenly spirits, and as not being able to bear the lustre of their countenances and garments:

They said unto them] That is, the angels said,

Why seek ye the living among the dead?] Intimating, that Christ, though he had been dead, was now living, and not to be sought for in a sepulchre. A way of speaking, much like this, is used in a parable of R. Levi's, concerning Pharaoh's not finding the name of God among the gods of the nations, upon searching for it. Moses and Aaron said to Pharaoh, "Thou fool, Is it usual for the dead to seek them among the living?" *וְהָיוּ מְבַקְשִׁים אֶתְּחַיֵּיהֶם בְּתוֹכָם* "or ever the living among the dead?" Our God is living, these thou speakest of are dead (a). Nor is Christ to be found among dead sinners, or lifeless professors, but among living saints, and among the churches of the living God; nor is life to be found among the dead works of the law, or to be obtained by lifeless performances on the dead letter of the law.

6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

—So in *Matt. xxviii. 6.* see the note there:

Remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee] For these women that followed him from Galilee, were along with the disciples when he said the following words to them; and which are recorded in *Matthew xvii. 22, 23.*

7 Saying, The Son of man must be deli-

vered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

As Christ was delivered, who is intended by the Son of man; he being the Son of David, and the Son of Abraham, and the Son of Adam; though he was the seed of the woman, and born of a virgin: he was truly man, and subject to the infirmities of men; for this is sometimes used as a diminutive expression, though a title of the Messiah in the Old Testament, and regards him in his state of humiliation. He was delivered into the hands of the band of men and officers by Judas, who came against him with swords and staves, as against a thief; and by the Jews to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, a very wicked man; and by him delivered to the will of the Jews, who, with wicked hands, took him, and slew him; and into the hands of the Roman soldiers, who crucified him; and who may more especially be meant by sinful men, the Gentiles; and especially heathen soldiers, being reckoned by the Jews notorious sinners: to be among sinners, in the company of such sinful men, must needs be very disagreeable to the holy and harmless Lamb of God; but to be in their hands, and at their mercy, whose tender mercies are cruel, must be very afflicting:

And be crucified] Which was a Roman death, and a very shameful, and painful one:

And the third day rise again] It is for the sake of this chiefly that the angels put the women in mind of this whole paragraph, which so fully confirms their testimony of his resurrection; and which the women might be assured of, upon calling to mind these words, which they themselves had heard from Christ's mouth; and it being now the third day since the death of Christ. The words declare, that all these things must be: that there was a necessity of them; partly on account of the decrees of God, by which it was determined they should be; and partly on account of the covenant-engagements of Christ, in which he agreed unto them; and also, by reason of the prophecies of the Old Testament, which gave out, that thus it must be; yea, our Lord's own predictions made them necessary; and the law, and justice of God required them; or otherwise, the salvation of God's people could not have been obtained.

8 And they remembered his words,

That is, "they remembered the words of Christ," as the Persic version expresses it; which they had forgot, and it may be had never truly understood till now; and had now their memories refreshed with them by the angels, and their understandings opened by the Spirit of God. Saints are sometimes apt to forget even the gracious promises of God,

(a) Shemot Rabba, §. 5. fol. 95. 3.

God, they have formerly understood and received comfort from; the word, or words, on which they have been caused to hope, until the Spirit of God, who is their best remembrancer, puts them in mind of them.

9 And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.

They returned quickly, immediately, as soon as ever the angel had done speaking to them; they fled from the sepulchre in great haste, as persons affrighted, and amazed, with fear and reverence, on account of the vision they saw, and with joy at what was told them; see *Mat. xxviii. 8. Mark xvi. 8.*

And told all these things. As that the stone was rolled away from the sepulchre; and that they found not the body of Jesus in it; that they had seen a vision of angels, who had told them, that Christ was risen; and had put them in mind of some words of his spoken to the disciples in their hearing in Galilee:

Unto the eleven, and to all the rest. Of the disciples; not only to the eleven apostles, but the seventy disciples, and as many others as were assembled together, perhaps the hundred and twenty, Acts i. 15. The *Perfic* version very wrongly reads, "to all the twelve;" for Judas was not now one of them, nor alive; and Matthias was not yet chosen.

10 It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

That Mary, out of whom Christ had cast seven devils, who was now a sincere penitent, a true believer in Christ, and an affectionate lover of him, and to whom he first appeared:

And Joanna. The wife of Chuza, Herod's steward; one that had been a follower of Christ, and had ministered to him of her substance; see *Luke viii. 2, 3.*

And Mary the mother of James. Called the less; and also of Joses, and Simon, and Judas, the brethren or kinsmen of Christ; this Mary, being the wife of Cleophas, or Alpheus, said (*h*) to be the brother of Joseph, the husband of Mary, the mother of our Lord:

And other women that were with them. As Salome, the mother of Zebedee's children, and others, that came from Galilee; *Mark xv. 40, 41. and chapter xvi. 1.*

Which told these things unto the apostles. Before observed.

11 And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.

As fabulous things, as mere whims, and the fancies of their brains: "as a dream," according to the *Perfic* version; or, "as a jest," as the Arabic version renders it. They looked upon them as mere deceptions and delusions, and not real things; the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Ethiopic* versions read, "these words;" what they related concerning what they saw and heard at the sepulchre:

And they believed them not. For they had no thought, nor expectation of Christ's rising from the dead; they did not know that he was to rise again, according to the scriptures; nor did they understand him when he told them of his rising again; and had no faith in it, nor hope concerning it, and could give no credit to it, when it was told them; and the Arabic version reads, "they did not believe it;" the word or report which the women delivered to them.

12 ¶ Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

Who, though he did not believe the report made, yet listened to it, and was alarmed and aroused by it, and was willing to know the truth of it:

And ran unto the sepulchre. Not alone, but with John, being in haste to be satisfied how things were:

And stooping down. See the notes on *Mark xvi. 5. and John xx. 5.*

He beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves. In which the body of Jesus was wrapped; these lay by themselves, without the body, in one place; and the napkin about his head was wrapped together, and lay in another place by itself; so that it was a plain case the body was not stolen, nor taken away; for neither friends, nor foes, would have taken the pains, or have lost so much time, as to have stripped the body, but would rather have carried off the clothes along with it. The *Alexandrian* copy leaves out the word, *alone*, "or by themselves:"

And departed. From the sepulchre to Jerusalem, to John's house there:

Wondering in himself at that which was come to pass. That the body should not be there, and yet the clothes should remain; he could not tell what to make of it. As for a resurrection, he had no notion of that, and yet could not account for the removal of the body, either by friends or foes, and the clothes left behind.

13 ¶ And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem *about* threescore furlongs.

"Two of the disciples," as the Perfic version reads, not of the eleven apostles, for it is certain that one of them was not an apostle; but two of the seventy disciples, or of the society of the hundred and twenty that were together; one of these was Cleophas, or Alpheus, as appears from *ŷ*. 18. the other is, by some, thought to be Luke the Evangelist, as Theophylact on the place observes, who, out of modesty, mentions not his own name; others have thought that Nathanael was the other person; and Dr Lightfoot seems very confident, from *ŷ*. 34. and 1 *Cor.* xv. 5. that the apostle Peter was the other; but it is not certain who he was: however, this very remarkable affair happened, and therefore a *behold* is prefixed to it, on the same day; the first day of the week; the day on which Christ rose from the dead; and the third day from his death it was, see *ŷ*. 1, 21. that these two disciples travelled,

To a village called Emmaus] Whither they might go, either to see their friends, or upon some secular affair, or to be retired from the noise of the city, and be secure from danger by their enemies; or it may be this was the place of Cleophas's abode, who, with the other disciple, was returning home after the celebration of the passover. The place whither they went, is particularly mentioned; not because it was a place of note, but for the certainty of the fact. It was now but a village, having been burnt since the death of Herod the great, by the order of Varus, the Roman governor (*c*); though it afterwards became a considerable city, if it is the same with Nicopolis, as Jerom asserts (*d*); though that rather seems to be the Ammaus, or Cham-math of Tiberias, since it was situated by the lake of Genesareth. However, it is certain, that Emmaus is reckoned, by Josephus (*e*), one of their chief cities; and Jarchi, and Bartenora (*f*) say, it is the name of a city; and Pliny (*g*) calls it a *toparchy*, and says it was watered with fountains; which agrees with the account the Jews give of it (*h*). "R. Eleazar ben Arach went to his wife, *למנוח* "at Emmaus," a place of pleasant waters, and a beautiful habitation." It is mentioned in company with Bethoron, and Lud, or Lydda: it is said (*i*), "From Bethoron to *מנוח* "Emmaus," is the mountain; and from "Emmaus to Lydda, the plain; and from Lydda "to the sea, the valley." Bethoron is mentioned

as near Nicopolis, by Jerom; and perhaps is the same with Betholone in Pliny: in Emmaus was a market; at least there was a butchers market in it; hence, we read of, *משלח של מנוח* "the shambles of Emmaus (*k*);" mention is made of a place so called, in 1 *Maccab.* iii. 40, 57. and chapter iv. 3. another Emmaus is here meant:

Which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs] Or seven miles and a half; for eight furlongs make a mile. Josephus (*l*) says the same, and confirms the account of the distance of this place from Jerusalem.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

They talked as they went along, on their journey,

Of all these things which had happened] Concerning their dear Lord and Master, Jesus Christ; how that he had been betrayed by Judas, one of his disciples; and had been led bound, first to Annas, and then to Caiaphas, the high priest, in whose palace he had been condemned to death; how that he was delivered by the chief priests and elders, to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, of whom they requested, that he might be crucified: they very likely discoursed also about the ignominious treatment he met with, both in the high priest's palace, and in Pilate's hall; and how at last he was crucified between two thieves, and was dead and buried; and particularly, they might be talking together of what they had heard that morning from the women, that had been at the sepulchre of Christ, and reported that he was risen.

15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together* and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

While they discoursed about the abovesaid things, *And reasoned*] With one another about the truth and credibility of the late report,

Jesus himself drew near] The Perfic version adds, *suddenly*; he came up at once to them, as if he had been a traveller on the road, and overtook them:

And went with them] Joined himself in company to them, and travelled with them.

16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

The Ethiopic version adds, "and were covered;" and the Arabic version renders it, "now he had veiled their eyes," ascribing it to Christ; and the Perfic version renders it, "and the eyes of "the

(c) Joseph. Antiq. l. 17. c. 12. (d) Epitaph. Paul. fol. 59. B. Catalog. Script. Eccl. fol. 98. B. tom. I. & in Dan. viii. 14. t. m. V. (e) Antiq. l. 14. c. 18. (f) In Mish. Ceritot, c. 3. §. 7. (g) Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 14. (h) Mid-rath Kohélet, fol. 74. 4. (i) T. Hieros. Sheviith, c. 9. fol. 38. 4.

(k) Mishna Ceritot, c. 3. §. 7. T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 91. 2. & Maccot, fol. 14. 1. (l) De Bello Jud. l. 7. c. 27.

"the disciples were shut:" to me it seems, that their eyes were held downwards; or they kept looking upon the ground as they walked, which was a posture suitable to their melancholy spirits; and there might be a peculiar influence of divine power and providence, so disposing them, that they did not look up to Christ, their new fellow-traveller, who walked on with them: and this was so ordered,

That they should not know him] That so they might not be surprised at once, as they would have been, had they looked at him, and discerned who he was; and that they might converse the more freely with him; and that he might convince them of their stupidity and unbelief, by proper arguments.

17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

That is, *Jesus*, as the Perfic version, or *our Lord*, as the Ethiopic version, expresses it:

What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk?] What is the subject of your discourse? What is it your conversation one with another turns upon in your journey?

And are sad?] What melancholy story are you telling to one another, which causes such sadness of countenance, and dejection of mind? For Christ, by their countenances and gestures, as the shaking of their heads, and lifting up and wringing of their hands, could easily discern as man, as well as he knew as God, that they were full of sorrow and heaviness, and which were occasioned and increased by what they were talking of.

18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleophas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

Cleophas, or Alpheus, for it is the same name; he was one of the seventy disciples, and father of the apostles James and Jude, and brother to Joseph, the husband of Mary, the mother of Christ, as before observed:

Answering, said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?] The Perfic version reads, "in these two days:" the sense is, "that whereas he appeared to come from Jerusalem, that if he was only a stranger and a sojourner, and not a stated inhabitant there, he could not be ignorant of what had been done there a few days past;" or if he was, that he must be the only

stranger, and the only man, that was so; for the facts referred to were so notorious, that every one must know them, inhabitant or stranger.

19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:

What things?] Still appearing as if he was ignorant, and in order to draw out of them a particular relation:

And they said unto him] Both of them, or rather Cleophas, for himself and his companion,

Concerning Jesus of Nazareth] That is, what had happened to him, who was commonly known by this name, and was called so by way of contempt: but,

Which was a prophet] Not only a foreteller of things to come, as he foretold his sufferings, death, and resurrection, the troubles that should befall his disciples, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the world; but he was a preacher of the Gospel, an eminent one, a famous and extraordinary one; that prophet which Moses spake of should come; and who was

Mighty in deed and word] He was anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power, which he shewed by the miracles he wrought; such as healing the sick, cleansing lepers, casting out devils, restoring sight to the blind, causing the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the lame to walk, and raising the dead to life; and in the doctrines he taught, which were with authority, and so as never man spake:

Before God and all the people] He was sent and anointed by God as a prophet, and approved by him; who bore testimony to him by a voice from heaven, declaring him to be his beloved Son; and the works he wrought were done publicly before men, who glorified God on that account; and the doctrines he taught were not taught in secret, but in the synagogues and in the temple, in the audience of all the people, and to their surprise and admiration.

20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

How our rulers, both civil and ecclesiastic,

Delivered him] To Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor,

To be condemned to death] The death of the cross, by the said governor; having first seized him and examined him before their sanhedrim, and pronounced him guilty of death:

And

And have crucified him] For though Pilate passed the sentence, and the Roman soldiers executed it, yet these men are said to do it, because it was at their request, and through their instigation, that it was done; hence Peter charges the Jewish sanhedrim with it, *Acts* iv. 10.

21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.

"We trusted in him," as the Ethiopic version adds,

That it had been he which should have redeemed Israel] They thought, hoped, and believed, that he was the Messiah, spoken of under the character of the Redeemer of Israel; and they had been in expectation of redemption by him, though only of a temporal kind, from the Roman yoke and bondage; but now they could not tell what to think of it, since he was dead: indeed they were not altogether without hope, since there was a report of his being raised from the dead; but what credit was to be given to that, they could not say: but certain it is, that he was the true Messiah, and promised Redeemer; and who was to redeem, and has redeemed the whole Israel of God; even all the elect of God, whether among Jews or Gentiles, from the servitude and damning power of sin, from the slavery of Satan, and the bondage of the law, and from every enemy; and that by his precious blood, his sufferings and death, the very things which were the occasion of these disciples doubts about him, as the Redeemer: so the Jews say (*m*), "That upon the death of the Messiah, the son of Joseph, all Israel shall flee to the deserts; and such as are of a doubtful heart, shall turn to the nations of the world, and say, 'Is this the redemption we have waited for, for the Messiah is slain?'"

And besides all this, to day is the third day since these things were done] Which is either mentioned as an aggravation of the ignorance of the stranger, that these things should be done so lately, as within three days, and yet he should be ignorant of them, or not remember them, and need to be informed about them; or as a further reason of their doubting, that it was now the third day since the death of Jesus, and there was nothing certain of his resurrection, only the report of the women, which they could not depend upon; or else as a reason of their trusting, that he was the person that should redeem Israel; since this was the third day from his crucifixion, the day on which he said he should rise from the dead, and of which there was a report

spread, not to be disproved, that he was that day actually risen. This day is greatly observed by the Jews (*n*): they take notice, that the scriptures speak of several remarkable *third days*; and besides *Genesis* xxii. 4. *Hosea* vi. 2. is cited a passage which refers to the resurrection of Christ on the third day; and they speak "of the third day of the tribes, *Gen.* xlii. 18. of the third day of the spies, *Josh.* ii. 16. of the third day of the giving of the law, *Exod.* xix. 16. of the third day of Jonas, *Jonah* i. 17. (which was a type of the resurrection of the Messiah, *Matt.* xii. 40.) of the third day of those that came up out of the captivity, *Ezra* viii. 15. of the third day of the resurrection of the dead, *Hos.* vi. 2. and of the third day of Esther," *Esther* v. 1."

22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;

Certain women who came with them from Galilee, who were of the same religion, professed the same faith, and belonged to the same society and community; who they were, and their names, see *Y.* 10.

Made us astonished] Surprised us with an account they brought, so that we could not, nor can we now tell, what to think or say of it; it is such an one, we know not how to believe, nor to disprove; it is we fear too good to be true, and should it be as they report, it is amazing indeed;

Which were early at the sepulchre] Of the person now mentioned, Jesus of Nazareth; even this very morning, by break of day, at least at sun-rising, whither they went to anoint his body, thinking nothing at all about the resurrection of him.

23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

They found not his body in the sepulchre, as they expected, and so could not do what they intended:

They came] They returned from the sepulchre with great haste, and in a very great fright, and came to the disciples, where they were assembled;

Saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels] The Syriac and Perlic versions add, *there*; at the sepulchre, for there were two of them at least, if not three; see *Y.* 4. *John* xx. 12. *Matt.* xxviii. 2. They not only reported, that they could not find the body of Jesus, but also that they had seen some angels: or the sense may be, that they told them, that though they could not find the dead body of their Lord, yet they had seen him alive,

(*m*) Abkath Rôel, l. i. par. 1. sign. 7. p. 53.

(*n*) Bereshit Rabba, §. 56. fol. 49. 3.

as they did by the way, as they were returning, *Matt.* xxviii, 9, 10. and also that a vision of angels had appeared to them :

Which said that he was alive] See *ψ.* 5, 6. So that it was not a deception of their sight : they certainly saw both Christ and the angels ; and were assured from their testimony, as well as by their own eyes and ears, that he was certainly risen : now, though this was so clear a point, and so well attested, the disciples knew not how to believe it ; they were perplexed about it ; they could neither receive it, nor discredit it ; they hoped it might be so, but feared it was not.

24 And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found *it* even so as the women had said : but him they saw not.

Who were with the apostles and brethren, who were together when the women came, and made the above report ; particularly Peter, who is named, *ψ.* 12. and John, who also was with him, as appears from *John* xx. 2.

These went to the sepulchre] Of Jesus, to satisfy themselves and their companions, as much as they could, about these things :

And found it even so as the women had said] That is, that the body of Jesus was not there, and that the linen clothes were laid by themselves :

But him they saw not] The Ethiopic version reads, "and him they found not : " the women, as before observed, might report, that though they found not the body in the grave, yet they saw him alive by the way ; but so did not the disciples ; which made it look very strange, doubtful, and suspicious, that the women should see him, and not his apostles ; they could not tell how to account for this, and this made them to be in suspense about the fact.

25 Then he said unto them, O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken !

That is, "Jesus said unto them," as the Syriac and Persic versions read :

O fools] Not in a natural sense, as if they were destitute of the common understanding of men ; nor in a moral sense, as wicked men, and as they themselves had been in their unregenerate estate ; nor in a way of anger and contempt, and with a design to provoke ; wherefore Christ did not act contrary to his own rule, in *Matt.* v. 22. but because they were so void of understanding in the scriptures, and were so very ignorant of them, and were so blind as to the knowledge of them ; particularly those which concerned the sufferings and resurrec-

tion of the Messiah, being influenced by the popular prejudices of education : he therefore expresses himself with much warmth, concern, and surprise, that he should have been so long with them, and they so long under his doctrine and ministry ; besides the advantages of having the scriptures, and being conversant with them from their youth ; and which they daily read, and had heard expounded, and yet were so very senseless and stupid,

And slow of heart to believe, all that the prophets have spoken] That is, upon these points, concerning the sufferings of Christ, and his resurrection from the dead ; and indeed, they were very slow of heart to believe, not only what the women reported from the angels, but even those of their brethren, who had seen him after he was risen ; for which Christ upbraids them, *Mark* xvi. 14. Yea, one of them declared after all, that he would not believe, unless he saw the print of the nails in his hands and feet, and put his hand into it, and thrust it into his side ; wherefore Christ had good reason to treat them in this sharp manner, and charge them with folly and incredulity. The Jews ought not to object to the word *fools*, as unbecoming Christ, since they frequently represent God as making use of it ; as for instance, it is said (*ψ.*), "The holy blessed God said to them, וְשׂוֹמְרֵי תּוֹרָה " O ye "fools" that are in the world, whatsoever ye do, "ye do for your own necessities.—And a little after, O ye fools that are in the world, he that "labours on the evening of the sabbath, shall "eat on the sabbath-day."

26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory ?

The things mentioned in *ψ.* 20. as, to be delivered by the chief priests, to be condemned to death, and to be crucified : Christ suffered many things in his personal character, being traduced as a sinful and wicked man, and a friend and encourager of sinners ; as a man of immoral principles and practices ; as an idolater, a blasphemer, and impostor, a seditious person ; as one that had had familiarity with the devil, and did his miracles by his assistance ; and with a load of other reproaches ; and these he endured, to answer to the loss of the divine honour and glory, sustained by the sin of man ; and to teach his people patience under the loss of their good names, characters, and reputations ; and he suffered much in his body, in the infirmities of it ; which he assumed with it, *being in all things like unto his brethren, excepting sin* ; and in the pains which he endured, through buffeting and scourging before his crucifixion, and when he hung upon the cross : and he suffered greatly in his soul, part-

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(*ψ.*) T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 2. 2. & 3. 1.

ly from the temptations of Satan; and partly from the treatment of his own disciples, through the frowardness of their spirits; and especially his being betrayed by one, denied by another, and forsaken by them all, must greatly afflict his mind; but chiefly from his bearing the loathsome sins of men, the stroke of justice, and the wrath of God; and particularly, through his being forsaken by him: and of all these there was a necessity; he *ought to have suffered these things*, as he did; the counsels and purposes of God, the covenant-transactions and agreement he himself entered into with his Father, the prophecies of the Old Testament, and his own predictions concerning these things, together with the salvation of his people, in a way consistent with the justice of God, and the honour of his law, made them necessary.

And to enter into his glory] Which began at his resurrection from the dead, and is seen in his exaltation, and session at the right hand of God; upon his ascension he was received up to glory, entered into it, took possession of it, and is crowned with it; and which will still be more manifest, when he shall come to judge the world in righteousness; when his saints also shall appear in glory with him, and shall be everlasting spectators of his glory: and indeed, his entrance into glory is not merely for himself, but in the name and behalf of them. The Vulgate Latin version reads, "and so, or thus to enter into his glory;" that is, by the way of sufferings, which is the way through which his saints enter the kingdom, *Acts* xiv. 22. And by a view of the glory that was to follow them, and which he and his people were to enjoy together, was he animated to endure them cheerfully and patiently; and this he is entered into, possesses and enjoys, as the consequence and reward of his sufferings.

27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

Beginning at the writings of Moses, the book of Genesis particularly, chapter iii. 15. which is the first prophecy of him, and speaks of the bruising of his heel, or of the sufferings of death by him; and proceeding to open and explain the types concerning his bearing the cross, and the lifting him upon it, in the business of Isaac, and of the brazen serpent; and concerning the shedding of his blood, and the oblation of himself in the sacrifices of the law of Moses:

And all the prophets] As David, Isaiah, Daniel, and others, very likely the passages in *Psalms* xxii. *Isaiah* liii. *Daniel* ix.

He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the

things concerning himself] Especially concerning these two points, his sufferings and his glory, of which the Spirit of Christ, in the prophets, testified beforehand: besides the above places referred to, concerning the sufferings of Christ, see the following, in reference to his resurrection and glory, *Psalms* xvi. 10, 11. and lxxviii. 18. and cx. 1, 7.

28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.

Drew nigh to the village of Emmaus, before they were aware; their conversation was so very agreeable, that the way did not seem tedious, nor the time long:

Whither they went] Where they intended to go when they set out: this was the end of their journey; wherefore this village was not some intermediate place between Jerusalem and Emmaus:

And he made as though he would have gone further] When they were come to Emmaus, and to the house where the two disciples intended to make their abode that night: whether it was a public house, or an house of one of their friends, or one of their own, it matters not; Christ stopped not, nor attempted to go in with them, but stepped a few steps onward, taking his leave of them. The Ethiopic version renders it, "he began to pass by them;" which carried in it an appearance as if he intended to have travelled further; and in it there was no fraud, dissimulation, or collusion: he would have gone some little way further doubtless, had they not detained him; and he intended to stay with them, provided they should ask him, as he did, though not all night, which he never designed: the whole of it is nothing else but a piece of modesty, civility, and prudence; for guile was never found in his mouth.

29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

The Arabic version renders it, "they held him by force:" but the meaning is, not that they laid hands on him, and held him in a forcible manner against his will, but they were very urgent and importunate with him, that he would stay with them; they would take no denial. The sense is better given in the Persian version, "the disciples with importunity said unto him;" they were so pressing with arguments, that he could not withstand them:

Saying, Abide with us] His conversation was so engaging, and his discourses were so heavenly and instructive,

instructive, so sweet and delightful, so powerful and moving, that they could not bear to part with him, but were exceeding desirous of his continuance with them, even though he was a stranger to them. And as they had in view their own pleasure and profit, so they urge the necessity and advantage of his stay, with respect to himself:

For it is towards evening, and the day is far spent] It might be four or five o'clock in the afternoon:

And he went in to tarry with them] For a while, not all night. So earnest, importunate, and resolute was the church, when she had found Christ, that he would abide with her, *Cant. iii. 4, 5.*

30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

When they were sat down at table with the provisions before them,

He took bread and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them] As if he was the master of the house, when he was both a guest, and a stranger, and as he used to do at common meals, when he eat with his disciples; and thus he did, when he fed five thousand at one time, and four thousand at another, *Matt. xiv. 19. and chap. xv. 26.* see the notes there. Whether only Christ, and the two disciples, sat down together, or whether others that belonged to the house sat down with them, is not certain: if they were only three, they were a proper company to bless the bread together; that is, one in the name of the rest, they joining with him: if there were but two they blessed, or said grace for themselves separately; but if three, the rules were these, according to the Jews (p): "Three that eat together, they are obliged to call a blessing (or for one). And how do they call a blessing among three? One says, Let us bless: if there are three besides himself, he says, Bless ye. Three that eat together have no power to divide;" that is, to make a separate blessing, but are obliged to it conjunctly: thus here, being three at least, Christ blessed bread for them all.

31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

Not that they were before shut, or closed up, but what before held them was removed, and what hindered their sight and knowledge was taken away; and perhaps these actions of his taking the bread, and blessing, and breaking, and giving it to them, might put them in mind of him, and cause them to look wistfully at him, when, what belated their sight, being gone, and he appearing in his usual form, they perceived who he was:

And they knew him] To be their dear Lord and Master, for whose death they had been sorrowing, and of redemption by him, and of whose resurrection they had been doubting:

And he vanished out of their sight] Not that he vanished as a spectre, or as smoak vanishes into air; but agility being a property of his risen body, he very suddenly, and swiftly, and in a moment, withdrew himself from them; for if he could withdraw himself from company in a very speedy manner before his resurrection, much more after; see *Luke iv. 30. John v. 13.* The Syriac version renders it, "he was taken away from them;" as if some of the ministering angels were made use of to remove him at once; but this seems not necessary: the Arabic version renders it, "he was hidden from them;" that same power of his that held their eyes all the while they were travelling together, interposed some object between him and them, so that he could not be seen by them that very instant, even before he was gone out of the house.

32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

After Christ was gone, being surpris'd at what happened, that they should not know him all that while; and that as soon as they did, he should disappear, or withdraw himself in this manner; they said,

Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? Concerning himself, his sufferings, death, and resurrection, which are in Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms: the scriptures are as a sealed book to men, learned and unlearned; and none so fit to open them as *the lion of the tribe of Judah*: he did open and explain them to these his disciples, as well as conversed with them about other things, as they travelled together; and his words came with such evidence, power, and sweetness, that they were ravished with them; their minds were irradiated with beams and rays of divine light; their hearts were warmed, and glowed within them; they became fervent in spirit, and their affections were raised and fired; they found the word to be as burning fire within them; and they now knew somewhat what it was to be baptized with fire, which is Christ's peculiar office to administer; see *Psalms xxxix. 3. Jer. xx. 9.* They seem, as it were, not only to reflect on these things with wonder and pleasure, but also to charge themselves with want of thought, with inattention and stupidity; since they might have concluded from the uncommon evidence, force, and energy with which his words came to them, who he was; seeing

(p) *Missa. Berceot, c. 7. §. 3, 3, 4.*

ing no man could speak as he did, and with such effect as his words had.

33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,

Though it was now evening, and the day was spent and gone; and notwithstanding what business they might have to do at Emmaus, about which they came, and even might not have made an end of eating, or sufficiently refreshed themselves; and though they had had a walk of sixty furlongs that afternoon, yet being big with this appearance of Christ to them, and in haste to impart the joyful news to their fellow-disciples, they immediately rose up from table,

And returned to Jerusalem] The same night, from whence they had come that day:

And found the eleven gathered together] At a certain house known to these two, and who met together in the night-season, for the sake of privacy, and for fear of the Jews; and who were now up, though it was late: these are called *eleven*, because Judas was now gone from them, and dead; and this being their whole number, it is used, though every one might not be present, as particularly Thomas was not; see *John xx. 19—24*.

And them that were with them] The seventy disciples, and other believers, both men and women, see *Acts i. 15*.

34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

These are not the words of the two disciples, but of the apostles, whom they found gathered together; and who, just as these two entered the room, said to one another, or rather to these two disciples, to whom at once, and as soon as ever they saw them, not being able to hold it in, they communicated the good news they had just heard, and which, perhaps, Peter had been just telling them. It is certainly matter of fact,

The Lord is risen indeed! For though the women were not credited, but their accounts were received as idle tales, and, at most, only occasioned some thoughts and reflections, which they could not settle; yet now they were satisfied of the reality of his resurrection, and speak of it with the greatest assurance and joy:

And hath appeared unto Simon] He appeared to him first, before he did to any of the rest, though he had denied him in so shameful a manner; which is an instance of great grace and goodness: and he appeared to him, on purpose, no doubt, to comfort him under his distress; as well as being the

oldest disciple, and a man of figure and credit among them, his report would be believed. None of the writers of the New Testament take notice of this appearance besides, only the apostle Paul, *1 Cor. xv. 5*. It is certain that it was the same day Christ rose from the dead; and it was after the women had seen him, and after Peter had been at the sepulchre; and before the return of the two disciples from Emmaus, and before he shewed himself to the rest of the apostles.

35 And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

That is, when the eleven had done speaking, and had finished their report, which they did with great joy and pleasure; then "these two disciples," as the *Peric* version expresses it, to confirm them the more in the truth of Christ's resurrection, gave them a particular account, how, as they were travelling, Jesus joined himself to them, and entered into a conversation with them, and opened the scriptures in a sweet and powerful manner to them; and yet their eyes were holden all the while, so that they did not perceive who he was:

And how he was known of them in breaking of bread] That so it was, that whilst he was breaking the bread, and giving it to them, and they were eating together, their eyes were opened, and they saw plainly who he was: now, though this was a common meal, and not the ordinance of the Lord's supper, yet since Christ made himself known to his disciples at an ordinary meal, may not his followers expect that he will make himself known to them, and grant them communion with him at his table? And which should be no small argument to engage believers to a constant attendance on it.

36 ¶ And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and said unto them, Peace be unto you.

While the two disciples, that came from Emmaus, were giving the above relation; just as they had finished it, and had scarcely done speaking,

Jesus himself stood in the midst of them] In the midst of the apostles; who were assembled together in a certain house, the doors being shut, for fear of the Jews; and it was on the evening of the same day Christ rose from the dead, and late at night; see *John xx. 19*, and without hearing the doors opened, or the sound of the feet of Jesus, and without seeing him come in, and approach unto them, he, in a moment, at once, stood in the midst of them, as if he had immediately rose up out of the earth before them: and so the *Peric* version renders it, "Jesus rose up out of the midst of."

"of them:" by his power he opened the doors, and secretly let himself in, and shut them again at once; and by the agility of his body moved so swiftly, that he was not discerned until he was among them, where he stood to be seen and known by them; whereby he made that good in a corporal sense, which he had promised in a spiritual sense, *Matt. xviii. 20.* and was an emblem of his presence in his churches, and with his ministers, to the end of the world.

And saith unto them, Peace be unto you] Which was an usual form of salutation among the Jews; see the note on *John xx. 19.* The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions add, "I am he, fear not;" but this clause is not in the Greek copies.

37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

Were terrified at the sight of him, and at his sudden appearance among them, without being heard or seen before, and the doors shut and bolted; they could not tell how to account for it, that it should be Jesus himself risen from the dead in his own body, though they had been just speaking of his resurrection, and had had a confirmation of it from the disciples that went to Emmaus:

And supposed that they had seen a spirit] That what they saw was a phantom, or apparition, or a spirit, that had assumed and appeared in the shape of Jesus, and was not he himself.

38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

Why are ye troubled?] Who had more reason to rejoice and be glad, as they were when they knew that it was Jesus:

And why do thoughts arise in your hearts?] Thoughts, whether what they saw was Jesus, or an apparition; which gave them a great deal of trouble and uneasiness, and filled them with fright and terror; as it was, and is usual with persons when they fancy they see a spirit, or an apparition; see *Matt. xiv. 26.*

39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

The Evangelist John adds, *and side;* that is, the prints of the nails and spear, in his hands, and feet, and side; and the wounds they made there, and the scars they left behind; by which they might be convinced he was not a spirit, and be assured of the truth of his resurrection, and that in the same numerical body in which he suffered; as well as that it might be observed by them how

great was his love to them, to endure what he did for them.

Handle me and see] Or know by feeling, as well as by sight; so that if the one was not sufficient, the other might confirm; sight might be deceived, but feeling could not: Apollonius Tyaneus, to them that did not know whether he was alive or dead, and who took him for a spirit, proposed himself to be touched, and handled, that they might be convinced (q):

For a spirit hath not flesh and bones] Nothing but appearance, or air at most; no solid substance to be felt and handled:

As ye see me have] Or may perceive, both by sight and feeling.

40 And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet.

Having thus spoken, and had put them into a method of satisfying themselves by their senses:

He shewed them his hands and his feet] That is, he held them forth to be seen and handled by them, which no doubt they did; and which were the infallible proofs by which he shewed himself alive to them after his passion; and by which they knew the truth of his incarnation, or that he had assumed a true and real body; and of the resurrection of the same body: see *Acts i. 3.* 1 *John i. 1.*

41 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?

Though they had been prepared for the belief of Christ's resurrection, by the report of the women, the relation of Simon Peter, and the account of the two disciples that came from Emmaus; yet such was the joy they were transported with, upon the evidence of it, the news was so good, and the favour and benefit so great, that they could scarcely believe their own senses of seeing and feeling.

And wondered] At the sight of their risen Lord, and at the power of God, which was seen herein: the thing was marvellous in their eyes, and was a wonderful confirmation of the truth of his Deity, Sonship, and Messiahship. X

He said unto them, Have ye here any meat?] Not that he needed any, or was hungry and desirous of some to satisfy, or gratify his appetite, but to give them a further proof that he was not a spirit; and that he was risen from the dead in a true and real body, which was capable of eating and drinking.

42 And they gave him a piece of broiled fish, and of an honey-comb.

Fifth

(q) Philostratus de Vita Apollon. l. 8. c. 5.

Fish which was left by them at supper, of which they had been eating; for being most of them fishermen, this was common food to them.

And of an honey-comb] Not to eat with the fish, but after it.

43 And he took it, and did eat before them.

That is, he took both the fish and the honey-comb, and did eat of them before the company, they looking on all the while; and which was a proof of his being truly risen from the dead, and not a spectre or apparition, and which they failed not afterwards to make use of; see *Acts* x. 41. The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions add, "he took the rest, or what remained, and gave it to them."

44 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

Or this is the substance of the words I spake unto you, the sense and meaning of them; for what follows we do not find any where expressed in so many words:

While I was yet with you] That is, whilst he was in his state of humiliation, whilst he dwelt among them, and had his abode with them; otherwise he was now with them, but not to continue with them; in a short time he was to ascend to his God, and their God, to his Father, and their Father.

That all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me] Concerning his sufferings, and death, and resurrection from the dead, spoken of in *Genesis* iii. 15. *Isaiah* liii. *Daniel* ix. 26. *Hosea* vi. 2. *Psalms* xxii. and xvi. 10. and in this he refers to what he had said to his disciples in *Mat.* xvi. 21. and chap. xvii. 22, 23. and xx. 18, 19. and alludes to the usual distinction among the Jews of the books of the Old Testament into the Law, the Prophets, and the *Hagiographa*; among which last stands the book of Psalms, and is put for the whole; a division often to be met with in both their Talmude (r), and other writings (s).

45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

He not only opened their hearts, to attend to

what he said, and the proofs he gave of his resurrection from the dead, in a true body; but he removed the veil from the eyes of their minds, and gave them an understanding of the sacred writings, respecting this matter:

That they might understand the scriptures] Concerning his sufferings, death, and resurrection, which they were very ignorant of before, and which were as a sealed book unto them, *John* xx. 9. though they had been from their infancy brought up to the reading of the scriptures, and had had the advantage of Christ's ministry for some years; which shews the necessity of the special illumination of the Spirit, and the influence of his grace, to remove the darkness of the mind, and give the true sense of the sacred writings.

46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

It is written in the above-cited books of the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms; not what after follows, in so many words, but the matter and substance thereof:

And thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day] It was necessary, both because of the decree and appointment of God, and because of the prophecies and predictions of the Old Testament; see *1. 25, 26.*

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

These are the sum of the Gospel-ministry; see *Mat.* xx. 21. the doctrine of repentance is not of the Law, which neither requires nor admits of it, but of the Gospel. The Persian version calls it, "the Gospel of repentance;" a doctrine preached by John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles; and the thing itself is a blessing of the covenant, a gift of God's grace, and in the hands of Christ to bestow; and therefore the doctrine of it is published in his name, as well as remission of sins; which, though it springs from the free grace of God, is procured by the blood of Christ, and through him it is preached. These two are joined together, not because repentance is the cause of pardon; for repentance makes no satisfaction for sin, nor atonement for it; nor does the law at all regard it: tears of repentance will not wash away sin; not withstanding these, iniquity remains marked before God; Christ's tears themselves did not take away, nor atone for sin; his blood must be shed, and it was shed for the remission of it; and that is the only meritorious cause of it. The Syriac version wrongly reads, "repentance for the remission

(r) T. Hieros. Shekalim, fol. 47. 1. T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 25. 1. & 18. 2. & 27. 1. Rosh Hashana, fol. 32. 1. Taanith, fol. 8. 1. & 16. 1. & 20. 1. & 30. 1. Megilla, fol. 21. 2. & 24. 1. Bava Batra, fol. 3. 1. & 32. 1. & Sanhedrin, fol. 106. 1.
(s) Zohar in Lev. fol. 39. 2.

"of sins:" the Jews (*t*) indeed have a notion that repentance atones for sin; but it is a very bad one, and has no countenance neither from the law of nature, nor the law of Moses: but these two are put together, because there is a connexion between them, as there is between repentance, and life, and salvation: repentance issues in these things; and to whomsoever the grace of repentance is given, to them the forgiveness of sins is applied; nor need any truly repenting sinner despair of the pardon of his sin: and indeed, there is no true evangelical repentance without views, or at least hopes of pardoning grace, and mercy; for that is attended with faith in Christ, and is heightened by the discoveries of forgiving love: such who have the fullest view of the remission of their sins, have the clearest sense of sin, and have the most sorrow for it, and lothe themselves on account of it, and are ashamed of it, and do most frankly confess it, and most thoroughly forsake it. And now it was necessary, according to Old-Testament-prophecies, that both these

Should be preached in his name] In the name of the Messiah; by his authority, and as coming through him; since the remission of sin is by his blood; and he is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, to give both repentance and forgiveness of sins to all the Israel of God; whether Jews or Gentiles; and therefore it is fitting and proper that these should be preached,

Among all nations] Of the world, where God's elect are; that so they may be brought hereby to repentance, and receive the forgiveness of their sins:

Beginning at Jerusalem] From whence, according to the Old Testament, the word and doctrine of the Lord were to go forth, *Psalms* cx. 2. *Isaiah* ij. 3. and is particularly mentioned, because the Gospel was to be first preached to the Jews, and be the power of God unto salvation to them; and because that in Jerusalem lived those who had been concerned in crucifying Christ, to whom repentance and forgiveness must be preached; and which would be a great encouragement to the vilest of sinners to hope for mercy and forgiveness, since such received both.

48 And ye are witnesses of these things.

As they were witnesses of the truth of his humanity, having seen, and heard, and handled him, both before, and after his resurrection from the dead; and of all that he did, of all the miracles that he wrought in Jerusalem, Judea, and Galilee, and of his transfiguration on the mount; so likewise of his sorrows in the garden, and of his sufferings in the palace of the high priest, and in

Pilate's hall, and on the cross; and of his death, which was the death of the cross; and also of his resurrection from the dead, in the same body, to whom he shewed himself alive by many infallible proofs; by shewing them the print of the nails in his hands and feet; by being handled by them; by eating and drinking in their presence; and by conversing with them for the space of forty days: and their business was also to testify the doctrine of repentance, and remission of sins, in Jerusalem, in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth, which they accordingly did; see *Acts* i. 8. and ii. 32. and chapter v. 30—32. and x. 39, 41. and xx. 21.

49 ¶ And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

By which is meant the promise of the Spirit, called the promise of the Father, because he was promised by the Father to be sent, and poured on the saints in the times of the Messiah, *Isaiah* xlv. 3. *Joel* ii. 28. and because Christ promised to pray the Father for him, and to send the Spirit from him; and that the Father should send him in his name, who would fit and qualify them for, and assist them in bearing a testimony for Christ; since he would teach them all things, lead them into all truth, take of the things of Christ, and shew them to them, and bring to their remembrance all things they had seen and heard: and this promise of the Father was to be sent in a very short time, in ten days time, as accordingly it was; and might be very properly said to be sent upon them, since, when he was sent down, he sat upon them in the appearance of fire; and this being a marvellous thing, as well as of great moment and importance, it is introduced with a *behold*, as a note both of admiration and attention.

But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem] For the space of ten days; here they were to continue during that time, and not depart thence; yea, they were to sit there, as the word used signifies: they were to sit still, and be silent; they were not to begin to preach; they were only to attend to prayer and christian conversation, and to wait for the Spirit, the promise of the Father; and who also is designed in the following clause:

Until ye be endued with power from on high] The Spirit of God is a Spirit of might, and of power; as well as of knowledge, of understanding, of counsel, of love, and of a sound mind; whereby they were to be fortified, and inspired with courage and greatness of soul, so as to look their greatest adversaries in the face with boldness and intrepidity,

(*t*) T. Bab. Corior, fol. 7. 1.

pidity, and freely, and without fear, speak unto them; and whereby their ministrations would be succeeded to the conversion of many souls. And accordingly so it was: for after the Spirit was poured out upon them, they who before were timorous and fearful, came forth publicly, with undaunted courage, and resolution, and boldness, to the amazement of their adversaries; and their preaching was with the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power; which Spirit may be said to be from on high, since he descended from heaven upon them; and they may be said to be *endued*, or *clothed* with him, since there was such an extraordinary and plentiful effusion of his gifts and graces on them; and now they were to wait in Jerusalem for this; that in the place where the Spirit had been dishonoured and blasphemed, and the unpardonable sin against him had been committed by the scribes and Pharisees, he might be, in a most visible and signal manner, honoured; and also, because the doctrine of the Lord was to go out of Zion, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem. The Vulgate Latin version leaves out the word Jerusalem, and reads only, "sit ye in the city until," &c. but then no other city can be designed.

50 ¶ And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

Not to the town of Bethany; could that be thought, it might be supposed that he led his disciples thither, to pay a visit to his dear friends there, Lazarus, Mary, and Martha, before his ascension; but the town of Bethany was fifteen furlongs, or near two miles distance from Jerusalem, *John xi. 18.* whereas the place from whence Christ ascended was but a sabbath-day's journey from it, which was two thousand cubits, or about a mile, *Acts i. 12.* This Bethany therefore was a tract of land, so called from the town, which began at the mount of Olives, where Bethphage ended; see *Mark xi. 1.* and hither from Jerusalem Christ led his disciples, in order to ascend to heaven in their sight; and this was the spot of ground where he began to ride in triumph to Jerusalem, and here he ascended in a triumphant manner to heaven; this was the place he frequently retired to for solemn and solitary prayer, and where he had put up many a strong cry to God, and now from hence he ascended to him; this was the place whither he went after he had eat his last passover, where he was taken, and from whence he came to suffer and die for his people:

And he lifted up his hands, and blessed them] The lifting up of his hands was not in order to put them upon his disciples; though the Ethiopic ver-

sion adds, "and put them on;" nor was it used as a prayer-gesture; nor was the blessing of them prayer-wise, or by praying for a blessing on them; but as Aaron, his type, lifted up his hands towards the people of Israel, and blessed them, when he had offered the offerings for them, *Lev. ix. 22.* So Christ, as the great high priest, having offered himself a sacrifice for the sins of his people, lifted up his hands towards his apostles, and blessed them in an authoritative way, by bestowing blessings upon them: he blessed them with a larger measure of the Spirit; for though they were to wait some few days longer for the extraordinary effusion of the Spirit, yet, in the mean while, they received from him more of it than they had formerly had; for he breathed upon them, and said, *Receive the Holy Ghost, John xx. 22.* He blessed them with larger measures of grace, and with more spiritual light and understanding into the scriptures of truth, and with much inward peace of mind, and with the fresh discoveries of pardoning love; and which seemed necessary, since by their conduct towards him, one by denying him, and the rest by forsaking him, the peace of their minds was broken, and they needed a fresh application of forgiving grace. The form of blessing the people, used by Aaron and his sons, the priests, who were types of Christ, is recorded in *Numbers vi. 23—27.* and though our Lord might not use the same form in blessing his disciples, yet it seems he used the same gesture, lifting up his hands, as they did. The Targumists say (u), the blessing of the priests was done by stretching, or spreading out their hands; but other Jewish writers observe, it was by lifting them up (x). "How is the blessing of the priests in the sanctuary (y)? says Maimonides, The priests go up into the desk, (or pulpit) after the priests have finished the morning daily service, and lift up their hands above, over their heads; except the high priest, who does not lift up his hands above the plate of gold on his forehead; and one pronounces them, (the blessings,) word for word, as they do in the borders (in the country,)" &c. And as our Lord used this gesture in blessing, it is very likely he complied with another rule, by expressing it in the Hebrew tongue; for the Jews say (z), "The blessing of the priests is not said in any place but in the holy tongue."

51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

(u) Targum Jon. in Num. vi. 23. & Targum in Cant. vii. 74. (v) Misna Sota, c. 7. §. 6. Bemidbar Rabba, §. 11. fol. 203. 1. (y) Hilchot Tephilla, c. 14. §. 3. 9. (z) Ibid. §. 11. Vid. Targum Jon. & Rabba, ut supra, & T. Baba Sana, fol. 38. 1.

While he blessed, just as he was finishing the words, by which he expressed the blessings he bestowed on them,

He was parted from them] As Elijah was from Elisha: their spiritual and mystical union by him remained, which is indissoluble; nor was his gracious presence from them withdrawn; nor was this parting in anger and resentment, as he sometimes does withdraw from his people, on account of their sinful conduct, in a little wrath, for a moment, resenting their unbecoming carriage: but this parting was while he was blessing them, and was only in the body; his heart was still with them; it was a withdrawalment of his corporal presence from them, and that but for a while; he will come again a second time from heaven, from whence the saints expect him, and then they will meet, and never part more:

And carried up into heaven] By his divine power, as God, by virtue of which he ascended himself, he went up gradually, till he became invisible to his disciples; or through the agility of his human body: for the bodies of the saints, when raised, will be like the angels, swift and nimble, and capable of moving from place to place, and of ascending and descending; and much more the glorious body of Christ, according to which, theirs will be conformed: though neither of these deny the use of means, that might be made, as of a cloud, and of angels; for *a cloud received him out of the sight of the apostles*; and there were the *twenty thousand chariots of God, even thousands of angels*, which attended him, when he ascended on high, and in which he may be properly said to be *carried up into heaven*, Acts i. 9. Psalm lxxviii. 17, 18. where he was received with a welcome, by his Father, by all the glorified saints, and holy angels, and where he is placed in human nature, at the right hand of God; *is crowned with glory and honour*, and exalted above all creatures, human or angelic; and where he will remain until the time of the restitution of all things, and then he will descend to judge the quick and dead. The Arabic and Ethiopic versions read both these clauses actively, "he parted himself, or he departed from them, and went up into heaven;" and so reads the Syriac version the last clause.

52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:

Worshipped him, not with a civil worship, as he was sometimes worshipped by men, in the days of his flesh, who, though they took him for some extraordinary person, knew him not to be the Son of God; but with religious worship, as God: for by his resurrection from the dead, Christ was declared to be the Son of God, and both by that,

and by his going to his Father, his ascension to heaven, the disciples were more confirmed in his proper Deity, and divine Sonship; and therefore worshipped him as God; by calling upon his name, ascribing blessings and honour, and glory to him; by making him the object of their reverence and fear; and by trusting in him; and by doing every religious act in his name, and which they ever after continued to do:

And returned to Jerusalem] As they were ordered, where they were to tarry and wait for the pouring down of the Spirit: and this they did

With great joy] For though their Lord was parted from them, and was gone to heaven, this did not cause sorrow, as did his death; but, on the contrary, joy, even great joy; partly because of the glory he was entered into and possessed of, and partly on account of what he was gone to do for them; *to appear in the presence of God for them*, to make intercession for them, to take possession of heaven in their name, and to prepare a place for them, as well as to receive gifts for them. And now they return to Jerusalem with great cheerfulness, in full hope and expectation, yea, assurance of faith, that they should shortly receive the promise of the Father.

53 And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

Attended constantly at the time of worship, at the hours of prayer, or of public service; and perhaps always privately in an upper room in it; where they, with others, met frequently, and continued with one accord in prayer and supplication; see the note on Acts i. 14. a practice worthy of imitation, whether in the public or private way;

Praising and blessing God] For his Son Jesus Christ, who had died for their sins, was risen again for their justification, and was now ascended into heaven, to be their advocate there; and for all spiritual blessings, wherewith they were blessed in and by Christ; for all the gifts bestowed upon them, and for what they had reason to expect; and for the honour done them in having a commission from Christ to preach his Gospel to every creature.

Amen] So let him be praised and blessed by all the saints, for all that is contained in this Gospel. In a manuscript copy of Beza's, it is added, "The Gospel according to saint Luke was published fifteen years after the ascension of Christ." See the note on the title of this Gospel.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST JOHN.

THE author of this Gospel is JOHN, the son of Zebedee and Salome, the brother of James the greater; he outlived the rest of the disciples, and wrote this Gospel after the other Evangelists; and in it many things are recorded which are not in the other Gospels; as various discourses of Christ, and miracles done by him; several incidents in his life, and circumstances that attended his sufferings and death. The occasion of it is generally thought to be the errors of Ebion and Cerinthus, who denied the divinity of Christ, asserted he was a mere man, and that he did not exist before his incarnation; and the design of it is to confute them: and it is easy to observe, that he begins his Gospel with the divinity of Christ; asserts him to be God, and proves him to be truly and properly so, by the works of creation, which were wrought by him, as well as shews that he was really man. Clemens (a) calls this Gospel of John, *πνευματικὸν Ευαγγέλιον*, "a spiritual Gospel," as indeed it is, consisting of the spiritual discourses of our Lord, on various occasions, both at the beginning, and in the course of his ministry, and especially a little before his sufferings and death: and the same writer observes, that John, the last of the Evangelists, considering that in the other Gospels were declared the things relating to the body of Christ, that is, to him, as he was after the flesh; to his genealogy and birth as man; to what was done to him, or by him, in his infancy; to his baptism, temptations, journeys, &c. he, at the request of his familiar friends, and moved by the Spirit of God, composed this Gospel. Moreover, it is observed by some (b), that the other three Evangelists, only record what was done by Christ in one year after John the Baptist was cast into prison, as appears from *Matthew* iv. 12. *Mark* i. 14. *Luke* iii. 20. wherefore John, at the intreaty of his friends, put those things into his Gospel, which were done or said by Christ, before John was cast into prison. He was called very early by Christ, though young; and was with him throughout the whole of his ministry, and was an eye and ear-witness of what he here relates, and his testimony is to be received. He was the beloved disciple, he leaned on the bosom of Jesus, and had great intimacy with him; and might be privy to some things which others were not acquainted with. And though he was a Galilean, and an unlearned man, *Mt* iv. 13. yet being endowed with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, he was abundantly qualified to write this book; for what some ancient writers (c) say of him, that he was a priest, and wore a plate, that is, of gold upon his forehead, cannot be true, since he was not of the tribe of Levi; and besides, only the high priest wore that upon his mitre; unless they mean, as seems most likely, that he was a christian bishop: perhaps the mistake may arise from John the Baptist, who was of the priestly order, and is called by some Jewish writers (d), John the high priest. When and where this Gospel was written, is not certain, some say in (e) Asia, after he had wrote his *Revelation* in Patmos; and others say particularly, that it was wrote at Ephesus. The title of it in the Syriac version, signifies as much, which runs thus; "The holy Gospel, the preaching of John, which he spoke and published in Greek at Ephesus." And to the same purpose is the title of it in the Peric version; "The Gospel of John, one of the twelve apostles, which was spoken in the city of Ephesus, in the Greek-Roman tongue."

CHAPTER I.

John proveith the dignity of Christ by his attributes, *John* 1—5. and by the testimony of John the Baptist, who proveith Christ to be the fountain of life, *John* 6—9. to create and govern the world, *John* 10, 11. He sheweth his blessing to believers, *John* 12. His incarnation, and converse upon earth: the glory and qualifications of his person, *John* 13, 14. His further testimony of the excellency and dignity of Christ's

person, *John* 15—18. Messengers from Jerusalem sent to ask who John was? His answer, that he was not the Christ, *John* 19—28. He seeing Christ, declareth him to be the Lamb of God, *John* 29—34. The disciples of John follow Jesus: Andrew inviteth Simon to Christ: He calleth him Cephas, *John* 35—42. Jesus calleth Philip, who inviteth Nathanael, who acknowledgeth Christ to be the Son of God, *John* 47—51.

IN.

(a) Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 6. c. 14. (b) Ibid. l. 3. c. 24. (c) Polycrates in ibid. l. 3. c. 31. & l. 5. c. 24. & Hieron. Ca-

talog. Script. Eccles. fol. 96. 5. 55. (d) Gana Tasmach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2. (e) Hieron. Prolog. Evang. Joannis.

IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

That this is said not of the written word, but of the essential Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, is clear, from all that is said from hence to *y. 14.* as that this *Word was in the beginning*, was with God; and is God; from the creation of all things being ascribed to him, and his being said to be *the life and light of men*; from his coming into the world, and usage in it; from his bestowing the privilege of adoption on believers; and from his incarnation; and also there is a particular application of all this to Christ, *y. 15—18.* And likewise from what this Evangelist elsewhere says of him, when he calls him *the Word of life*, and places him between the Father and the Holy Ghost; and speaks of the record of the Word of God, and the testimony of Jesus, as the same thing; and represents him as a warrior and conqueror, *1 John i. 1, 2.* and chap. *v. 7.* *Rev. i. 2, 9.* and chapter *xix. 11—16.* Moreover, this appears to be spoken of Christ, from what other inspired writers have said of him under the same character; as the Evangelist Luke, chapter *i. 2.* the Apostle Paul, *Acts xx. 32.* *Heb. iv. 12.* and the Apostle Peter, *2 Peter iii. 5.* And who is called *the Word*, not as man; for as man he was not in the beginning with God, but became so in the fulness of time; nor is the man God; besides, as such, he is a creature, and not the creator, nor is he the life and light of men; moreover, he was the Word before he was man, and therefore not as such: nor can any part of the human nature be so called; not the flesh, for *the Word was made flesh*; nor his human soul, for self-subsistence, Deity, eternity, and the creation of all things, can never be ascribed to that; but he is the Word as the Son of God, as is evident from what is here attributed to him, and from the Word being said to be so, as in *y. 14, 18.* and from those places where *the Word* is explained by *the Son*, compare *1 John v. 5, 7.* *Matt. xxviii. 19.* And is so called from his nature, being begotten of the Father; for as the word, whether silent or expressed, is the birth of the mind, the image of it, equal to it, and distinct from it; so Christ is *the only begotten of the Father, the express image of his person*; in all things equal to him, and a distinct person from him; and he may be so called, from some action, or actions, said of him, or ascribed to him; as that he spoke for, and on the behalf of the elect of God, in the eternal council and covenant of grace and peace; and spoke all things out of nothing, in creation; for with regard to those words so often mentioned in the history of the creation, *and God said, may Jehovah the Son be called the Word*; also he was spoken

of as the promised Messiah, throughout the whole Old-Testament dispensation; and is the interpreter of his Father's mind, as he was in Eden's garden, as well as in the days of his flesh: and now speaks in heaven for the saints. The phrase, *וְדָבָר* "the Word of the Lord," so frequently used by the Targumists, is well known; and it is to be observed, that the same things which John here says of the Word, they say likewise, as will be observed on the several clauses; from whence it is more likely, that John should take this phrase; since the paraphrases of Onkelos and Jonathan ben Uzziel, were written before his time; than that he should borrow it from the writings of Plato, or his followers, as some have thought; with whose philosophy Ebion and Cerinthus, are said to be acquainted; wherefore John, the more easily to gain upon them, uses this phrase, when that of the Son of God would have been disagreeable to them. That there is some likeness between the Evangelist John and Plato in their sentiments concerning the Word, will not be denied. Amelius (*f*), a Platonic philosopher, who lived after the times of John, manifestly refers to these words of his, in agreement with his master's doctrine: his words are these; "And this was truly *Logos*, or the Word, by whom always existing, the things that are made, were made, as also Heraclitus thought; and who, likewise that Barbarian (meaning the Evangelist John) reckons, was in the order and dignity of the beginning, constituted with God, and was God, by whom all things are entirely made; in whom, whatsoever is made, lives, and has life, and being; and who illapsed into bodies, and was clothed with flesh, and appeared a man; so notwithstanding, that he shewed forth the majesty of his nature; and after his dissolution, he was again deified, and was God, as he was before he descended into a body, flesh and man." In which words it is easy to observe, plain traces of what the Evangelist says in the first four verses, and in the fourteenth verse of this chapter; yet it is much more probable, that Plato had his notion of the *Logos*, or Word, out of the writings of the Old Testament, than that John should take this phrase, or what he says concerning the Word, from him; since it is a matter of fact not disputed, that Plato went into Egypt to get knowledge; not only Clemens Alexandrinus, a christian writer says, that he was a philosopher of the Hebrews (*g*), and understood prophecy (*h*), and stirred up the fire of the Hebrew philosophy (*i*); but it is affirmed by heathen writers, that he went into Egypt to learn of the priests (*k*), and to understand the rites of the prophets.

(f) Apud Euseb. Prepar. Evangel. l. 11, c. 19.

(g) Stromat. l. 1, p. 274.

(h) Ibid. p. 303.

(i) Valer. Maxim. l. 8, c. 7.

prophets (1). And Aristobulus, a Jew, affirms (m), he studied their law; and Numenius, a Pythagoric philosopher (n), charges him with stealing what he wrote, concerning God and the world, out of the books of Moses; and used to say of him, "What is Plato, but Moses Atticising? or Moses speaking Greek?" And Eusebius (o), an ancient christian writer, points at the very places from whence Plato took his hints: wherefore it is more probable, that the Evangelist received this phrase of the Word, as a divine person, from the Targums, where there is such frequent mention made of it; or however, there is a very great agreement between what he and these ancient writings of the Jews say of the Word, as will be hereafter shewn. Moreover, the phrase is frequently used, in like manner, in the writings of Philo the Jew; from whence it is manifest, that the name was well known to the Jews, and may be the reason of the Evangelist's using it. This Word he says,

Was in the beginning] By which is meant, not the Father of Christ; for he is never called the beginning, but the Son only; and was he, he must be such a beginning as is without one; nor can he be said to be so, with respect to the Son or Spirit, who are as eternal as himself; only with respect to the creatures, of whom he is the author and efficient cause: Christ is indeed in the Father, and the Father in him; but this cannot be meant here; nor is the beginning of the Gospel of Christ, by the preaching of John the Baptist, intended here; John's ministry was an evangelical one, and the Gospel was more clearly preached by him, and after him by Christ and his apostles, than before; but it did not then begin; it was preached before by the angel to the shepherds, at the birth of Christ; and before that, by the prophets under the former dispensation, as by Isaiah, and others; it was preached before unto Abraham, and to our first parents in the garden of Eden: nor did Christ begin to be, when John began to preach; for John's preaching and baptism, were for the manifestation of him; yea, Christ existed as man, before John began to preach; and though he was born after him as man, yet as the Word and Son of God, he existed before John was born; he was in being in the times of the prophets, which were before John; and in the times of Moses, and before Abraham, and in the days of Noah: but by *the beginning* is here meant, the beginning of the world, or the creation of all things; and which is expressive of the eternity of Christ; for he was in the beginning, as the maker of all creatures, and therefore must be before them all: and it is to be observed, that it is said of him,

that in the beginning he *was*; not *made*, as the heavens and the earth, and the things in them were; nor was he merely in the purpose and predestination of God, but really existed as a divine person, as he did from all eternity; as appears from his being set up in office from everlasting; from all the elect being chosen in him, and given to him before the foundation of the world; from the covenant of grace, which is from eternity, being made with him; and from the blessings and promises of grace, being as early put into his hands; and from his nature as God, and his relation to his Father. So Philo the Jew often calls the *Logos*, or Word, the eternal Word, the most ancient Word, and more ancient than any thing that is made (p). The eternity of the Messiah is acknowledged by the ancient Jews: Micah v. 2. is a full proof of it; which by them (q) is thus paraphrased; "Out of thee, before me, shall come forth the Messiah, that he may exercise dominion over Israel; whose name is laid from eternity, from the days of old." Jarchi upon it only mentions Psalm lxxii. 17. which is rendered by the Targum on the place, *before the sun his name was prepared*; it may be translated, *before the sun his name was Tinnou*; that is, the Son, namely the Son of God; and Aben Ezra interprets it, *he shall be called the Son*; and to this agrees what the Talmudists say (r), that the name of the Messiah was before the world was created; in proof of which they produce the same passage.

And the Word was with God] Not with men or angels; for he was before either of these; but with God, not essentially, but personally considered; with God his Father: not in the Socinian sense, that he was only known to him, and to no other, before the ministry of John the Baptist; for he was known and spoken of by the angel Gabriel before; and was known to Mary and to Joseph; and to Zacharias and Elisabeth; to the shepherds, and to the wise men; to Simeon and Anna, who saw him in the temple; and to the prophets and patriarchs in all ages, from the beginning of the world. But this phrase denotes the existence of the Word with the Father, his relation and nearness to him, his equality with him, and particularly the distinction of his person from him, as well as his eternal being with him; for he was always with him, and is, and ever will be: he was with him in the council and covenant of grace, and in the creation of the universe, and is with him in the providential government of the world; he was with him as the Word and Son of God.

(1) Apuleius de Dogmate Platonis, l. 1. in Principio.

(m) Apud Euseb. Prepar. Evangel. l. 13. c. 11.

(n) Helych. Milot, de Philosophis. p. 50.

(o) Prepar. Evangel. l. 11. c. 9.

(p) De Leg. Alleg. l. 2. p. 93. de Plant. Noc. p. 217. de Migrat. Abraham, p. 389. de profugis, p. 466. quibus ver. divit. Helych. p. 509. (q) Targum Jon. in loc. 201. 101. (r) T. Bab. Piltchim, fol. 54. 1. & Nedarim, fol. 39. 2. Pirke Eliezer, c. 3.

God in heaven, whilst he, as man, was here on earth; and he is now with him, and ever will be. And as John here speaks of the Word, as a distinct person from God the Father, so do the Targums, or Chaldee paraphrases; *Psalms* cx. 1. *The Lord said to my Lord*, is rendered, "the Lord said to his Word;" where he is manifestly distinguished from *Jehovah*, that speaks to him; and in *Hosea* i. 7. the Lord promises to have mercy on the house of Judah, and save them by the Lord their God. The Targum is, "I will redeem them by the Word of the Lord their God;" where the Word of the Lord, who is spoken of as a Redeemer and Saviour, is distinguished from the Lord, who promises to save by him. This distinction of *Jehovah* and his Word, may be observed in multitudes of places in the Chaldee paraphrases, and in the writings of Philo the Jew; and this phrase, of the Word being with God, is in the Targums expressed by, "מִמֶּנּוּ מִן קִדְּשׁוֹ" "the Word from before the Lord, or which is before the Lord;" being always in his presence, and the angel of it; so Onkelos paraphrases *Genesis* xxxi. 22. *And the Word from before the Lord, came to Laban*, &c. and *Exodus* xx. 19. thus, *And let not the Word from before the Lord speak with us, lest we die*; for so it is read in the king of Spain's Bible. And Wisdom, which is the same with the Word of God, is said to be *by him*, or *with him*, in *Prov.* viii. 30. agreeable to which John here speaks. John makes use of the word God, rather than Father, because the Word is commonly called the Word of God, and because of what follows;

And the Word was God.] Not made a God, as he is said hereafter to be *made flesh*; nor constituted or appointed a God, or a God by office; but truly and properly God, in the highest sense of the Word, as appears from the names by which he is called; as *Jehovah*, God; our, your, their, and my God; God with us; the mighty God; God over all; the great God; the living God; the true God; and eternal life: and from his perfections, and the whole fulness of the Godhead that dwells in him, as independence, eternity, immutability, omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence. And from his works of creation and providence, his miracles, the work of redemption, his forgiving sins, the resurrection of himself and others from the dead, and the administration of the last judgment; and from the worship given him, as prayer to him, faith in him, and the performance of baptism in his name. Nor is it any objection to the proper Deity of Christ, that the article is here wanting; since when the Word is applied to the Father, it is not always used, and even in this chapter, *John* 6, 13, 18. and which shews, that the word God, is not the subject, but the predicate of

this proposition, as we render it: so the Jews often use the Word of the Lord for *Jehovah*, and call him God. Thus the words in *Genesis* xxviii. 20, 21. are paraphrased by Onkelos; "If the Word of the Lord will be my help, and will keep me, &c. then the Word of the Lord shall be my God:" again, *Levit.* xxvi. 12. is paraphrased by the Targum ascribed to Jonathan ben Uzziel, thus; "I will cause the glory of my Shekinah to dwell among you, and my Word shall be your God, the Redeemer." Once more, *Deut.* xxvi. 17. is rendered by the Jerusalem Targum after this manner; "Ye have made the Word of the Lord king over you this day, that he may be your God." And this is frequent with Philo the Jew, who says, The name of God is his Word, and calls him, "My Lord, the divine Word;" and affirms, that the most ancient Word is God (s).

2. The same was in the beginning with God.

This is a repetition of what is before said, and is made, to shew the importance of the truths before delivered; namely, the eternity of Christ, his distinct personality, and proper Deity; and that the phrase *in the beginning*, is to be joined to each of the above sentences; and so proves, not only his eternal existence, but his eternal existence with the Father, and also his eternal Deity; and is also made to carry on the thread of the discourse concerning the Word, and not God the Father; and to express, not only his co-existence in nature, but his co-operation in the works of creation next mentioned.

3. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

All things, &c.] Which is a proof at once of all that is said before; as that he was in the beginning; and that he was with God the Father in the beginning; and that he was God; otherwise all things could not have been made by him, had either of these been untrue: which is to be understood, not of the new creation; for this would be a restraining all things to a few persons only; nor is it any where said, that all things are new made, but made; and it is false, that all were converted, that have been converted by the ministry of Christ, as man: all men are not renewed, regenerated, nor reformed; and the greater part of those that were renewed, were renewed before Christ existed, as man; and therefore could not be renewed by him, as such: though indeed, could this sense be established, it would not answer the end for which it is coined; namely, to destroy the

(s) De Allegor. l. 2. p. 99, 101. & de Somniis, p. 599.

the proof of Christ's Deity, and of his existence before his incarnation; for in all ages, from the beginning of the world, some have been renewed; and the new creation is a work of God, and of almighty power, equally with the old; for who can create spiritual light, infuse a principle of spiritual life, take away the heart of stone, and give an heart of flesh, or produce faith, but God? Regeneration is denied to be of man, and is always ascribed to God; nor would Christ's being the author of the new creation, be any contradiction to his being the author of the old creation, which is intended here: by *all things*, are meant the heaven, and all its created inhabitants; the airy, starry, and third heavens, and the earth, and all therein; the sea, and every thing that is in that: and the Word, or Son of God, is the efficient cause of all these; not a bare instrument of the formation of them; for the preposition *by* does not always denote an instrument, but sometimes an efficient, as in 1 Cor. i. 9. 2 Cor. i. 1. Gal. i. 1. and so here, though not to the exclusion of the Father, and of the Spirit:

And without him was not any thing made that was made] In which may be observed the conjunct operation of the Word, or Son, with the Father and Spirit, in creation; and the extent of his concern in it to every thing that is made; for without him there was not one single thing in the whole compass of the creation made; and the limitation of it to things that are made; and so excludes the increated being, Father, Son, and Spirit; and sin also, which is not a principle made by God, and which has no efficient, but a deficient cause. So the Jews ascribe the creation of all things to the Word. The Targumists attribute the creation of man, in particular, to the Word of God: it is said in Gen. i. 27. *God created man in his own image*; the Jerusalem Targum on it is; "And the Word of the Lord created man in his likeness." And Gen. iii. 22. *And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us*; the same Targum paraphrases thus; "And the Word of the Lord God said, Behold the man, whom I have created, is the only one in the world." Also in the same writings, the creation of all things in general is ascribed to the Word: the passage in Deut xxxiii. 27. *The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms*; is paraphrased by Onkelos, "The eternal God is an habitation, by whose Word the world was made." In Isai. xlviii. 13. it is said, *Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth*. The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel on it is; "Yea, by my Word I have founded the earth." Which agrees with what is said in Heb. xi. 3. 2 Pet. iii. 5, 7. And the same says Philo the Jew, who not only calls him the archetype, and exemplar of the world, but the power that

made it: he often ascribes the creation of the heavens and the earth unto him, and likewise the creation of man, after whose image, he says, he was made (*t*). The Ethiopic version adds, at the end of this verse, "and also that which is made is for himself."

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

The Perfic version reads in the plural number, *lives*. There was life in the Word with respect to himself; a divine life, the same with the life of the Father and of the Spirit; and is in him, not by gift, nor by derivation or communication; but originally, and independently, and from all eternity: indeed he lived before his incarnation as Mediator, and Redeemer. Job knew him in his time, as his living Redeemer; but this regards him as the Word and living God, and distinguishes him from the written word, and shews that he is not a mere idea in the divine mind, but a truly divine person: and there was life in Christ the Word, with respect to others; the fountain of natural life is in him, he is the efficient cause, and preserver of it; whether vegetative, animal, or rational; and proves him to be truly God, and that he existed before his incarnation; since creatures, who have received such a life from him did: and spiritual life was also in him; all his elect are dead in trespasses and sins, and cannot quicken themselves. Christ has procured life for them, and gives it to them, and implants it in them; a life of sanctification is from him; and a life of justification is upon him, and of faith is by him; all the comforts of a spiritual life, and all things appertaining to it, are from him, and he maintains and preserves it. Eternal life is in him, and with him; not the purpose of it only, nor the promise of it barely, but the gift of it itself; which was granted in consequence of his asking it, and which he had by way of stipulation; and hence has a right and power to bestow it: now, this being in him, proves him to be the true God, and shews us where life is to be had, and the safety and security of it:

And the life was the light of men] The life which was in and by the Word, was, with respect to men, a life of light, or a life attended with light: by which is meant, not a mere visive faculty, receptive of the sun's light, but rational knowledge and understanding; for when Christ, the Word, *breathed into man the breath of life, and he became a living soul*, he filled him with rational light and knowledge. Adam had a knowledge of God; of his

(t) De Mundi Opificio, p. 4, 5, 31, 32. De Alleg. l. 1. p. 44. De Sacrificiis Abel & Cain, p. 131. De Profugis, p. 464. & de Monarch. p. 823.

his being, and perfections; of the persons in the Trinity; of his relation to God, dependence on him, and obligation to him; of his mind and will; and knew what it was to have communion with him. He knew much of himself, and of all the creatures; this knowledge was natural and perfect in its kind, but loseable; and different from that which saints now have of God, through Christ the mediator; and since this natural light was from Christ the Word, as a creator, he must be the eternal God. The Socinians are not willing to allow this sense, but say that Christ is the *light of men*, by preaching the heavenly doctrine, and by the example of his holy life; but hereby he did not enlighten every man that cometh into the world; the greatest part of men before the preaching and example of Christ, sat in darkness; and the greatest part of the Jews remained in darkness, notwithstanding his preaching and example; and the patriarchs that were enlightened under the former dispensation, were not enlightened this way: it will be owned, that all spiritual and supernatural light, which any of the sons of men have had, since the fall, was from Christ, from whom they had their spiritual life; even all spiritual light in conversion, and all after-degrees of light; through him they enjoyed the light of God's countenance, and had the light of joy and gladness here, and of glory hereafter.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

Darkness, &c.] Which, through sin, came upon the minds of men; who are naturally in the dark about the nature and perfections of God; about sin, and the consequences of it; about Christ, and salvation by him; about the Spirit of God, and his work upon the soul; and about the scriptures of truth, and the doctrines of the Gospel. Man was created a knowing creature, but not content with his knowledge, sinned, and was banished from the presence of God, the fountain of light; which brought a darkness on him and his posterity; and which is increased in them by personal iniquity; and in which Satan, the god of this world, has an hand; and sometimes they are left to judicial blindness, and which issues in total darkness, if grace prevents not: now amidst this darkness there were some remains of the light of nature, with respect to the being of God, which shines in the works of creation and providence; and to the worship of God, though very dimly; and to the knowledge of moral good and evil:

And the darkness comprehended it not] Or "perceived it not," as the Syriac version renders it. By the light of nature, and the remains of it, men could not come to any clear and distinct knowledge

of the above things; and much less to any knowledge of the true way of salvation: unless, rather, by the light should be meant the light of the Messiah, or of the Gospel, shining in the figures, types and shadows of the law, and in the prophecies and promises of the Old Testament; and yet, such was the darkness upon the minds of men, that they could not very distinctly apprehend it, and much less fully comprehend it; so that there was need of a fresh and fuller revelation: an account of which follows;

6 ¶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

John the Baptist: he was not the *Logos*, or Word; nor was he an angel, but a man; yet an extraordinary one, in his conception of a barren woman, and in being born when both parents were stricken in years: and whilst he was in the womb, he leaped for joy at the salutation of Mary; and as soon as born was filled with the holy Ghost; and when he was grown up, and appeared in public, it was in an uncommon manner: his dress, and his diet were both out of the common way; and his temper and spirit were that of Elias the prophet; and as for his work and office, it was very peculiar; he was the forerunner of Christ, and the first administrator of the new ordinance of baptism, and the greatest of all the prophets. This person had his mission from God, both to preach and baptize.

Whose name was John] The name given him by the angel before his conception, and by his mother Elisabeth, after her neighbours and cousins had given him another; and which was confirmed by his father Zacharias, when deaf and dumb: it signifies *grace*, or *gracious*; and a gracious man he was: he was very acceptable to his parents; a man that had the grace of God in him, and great gifts of grace bestowed on him; he was a preacher of the doctrines of grace; and his ministry was very grateful to many.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

A witness, &c.] The end of his being sent, and the design of his coming were,

To bear witness of the Light] By which is meant, not the light of nature, or reason; nor the light of the Gospel; but Christ himself, the author of light, natural, spiritual and eternal. This was one of the names of the Messiah with the Jews; of whom they say (u), *נורא נאמר*, "light is his name," as it is said in *Daniel ii. 22.* *and the light dwelleth with him*; on which they have (w) elsewhere this gloss, "This

(u) Beha Rabbati, fol. 50. 2.

(w) Besebit Rabbati, fol. 1. 4.

"is the king Messiah;" and so they interpret *Psalm* xliii. 3. of him (x). Philo the Jew often speaks of the *Logos*, or Word, as light; and calls him the intelligible light, the universal light, the most perfect light; represents him as full of divine light; and says, he is called *the sun* (y). Now John came to bear a testimony to him, as he did; of which an account is given in this chapter very largely, and elsewhere; as that he testified of his existence before his incarnation; of his being with the Father, and in his bosom; of his Deity, and divine Sonship; of his being the Messiah; of the fulness of grace that was in him; of his incarnation and satisfaction; of his descent from heaven; and of his relation to his church, as in *Y. 15, 16, 18, 23, 27, 29, 30, 34, 36.* and in chapter iii. 29, 31. the end of which witness was,

That all men through him might believe] That is, that the Jews, to whom he preached, might, through his testimony, believe that Jesus was the light, and true Messiah: for these words are to be taken in a limited sense, and not to be extended to every individual of mankind; since millions were dead before John began his testimony, and multitudes then in being, and since, whom it never reached: nor can it design more than the Jews, to whom alone he bore witness of Christ; and the faith which he taught, and required by his testimony, was an assent unto him as the Messiah. Though the preaching of the Gospel is a means of true spiritual faith in Christ; and doubtless it was so to many, as preached by John: it points out the object of faith, and encourages souls to believe in Christ; and hence, Gospel-ministers are instruments by whom others believe; and *faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*; and then is a considerable end of the Gospel-ministry answered.

8 He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

He was a light; he was the forerunner of the Sun of righteousness, the phosphorus of the Gospel-day; he had great light in him; he knew that the Messiah was ready to come, and declared it; and upon his baptism he knew him personally, and signified him to others: he had great light into the person and work of Christ; and into the way of salvation by him, and remission of sins through him; into the doctrines of faith in Christ, and of evangelical repentance towards God; and into the abolition of the legal, Mosaic and Jewish dispensation; and was an instrument of giving light to others; yea, he *was a burning and shining light*, in whose light the Jews rejoiced, at least for a season: but then he was not *that Light*, the Word and Wis-

dom of God; that increased Light that dwelt with him from all eternity; nor that which was the Light of men from the creation; nor that Light which was of old promised to the saints and patriarchs of the Old Testament, and shone in the ordinances and predictions of that state; nor that fountain and giver of light, of every sort, to men; not *that Light in which is no darkness*, and always shines; not that true Light, or Sun of righteousness, the Messiah, or *that lightens every man that comes into the world*:

But was sent to bear witness of that Light] Which is repeated to distinguish him from *that Light*; to shew what he was sent for, and that he acted according to his mission; and to express the honourableness of his work.

9 *That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.*

The true Light, &c.] Christ is that light, that famous and excellent light, the fountain of all light to all creatures; that gave light to the dark earth at first, and spoke light out of darkness; that light of all men in the earth, and of all the angels in heaven, and of all the saints below, and of all the glorified ones above: he is the *true Light*, in distinction from *typical lights*, the *Urim* of the former dispensation; the candlestick, with the lamps of it; the pillar of fire which directed the Israelites by night in the wilderness; and from all the typical light there was in the institutions and sacrifices of the law; and in opposition to the law itself, which the Jews (z) magnify, and cry up as *the light*, saying, "There is no light but the law;" and in opposition to all false lights, as priests, diviners, and soothsayers, among the Gentiles; scribes, and Pharisees, and the learned Rabbins, among the Jews, so much boasted of as the lights of the world; and to all false christ's and prophets that have risen, or shall rise in the world.

Which lighteth every man that cometh into the world] The sense is, either that every man that is enlightened in a spiritual manner, is enlightened by him; which is true of Christ, as the Son of God, existing from the beginning: but not in the Socinian sense, as if they were enlightened by his human ministry and example; for the Old Testament saints were not enlightened by his preaching; and many were enlightened by the ministry of John the Baptist; and multitudes afterwards, through the ministry of the apostles; and very few, comparatively, were enlightened under the ministry of Christ; and none we read of, in this sense, enlightened by him, when, and as soon as they came into

(x) Jarchi in *ibid.*

(y) *De Mundi Opificio*, p. 6. *De*

Allegor. l. 2. p. 80. & *de Somniis*, p. 376, 378.

(z) *T. Bava Bathra*, fol. 4. 2.

into the world: or the meaning is, that he is *that Light* which lighteth all sorts of men; which is true in a spiritual sense: some connect the phrase, *that cometh into the world*, not with *every man*, but with the *true Light*; and the Arabic version so reads, and joins it to the following verse: but this reading is not so natural, and the order of the words requires the common reading; nor is the difficulty removed hereby; for still it is every man that is enlightened: it is best therefore to understand these words of the light of nature, and reason, which Christ, as the Word, and Creator, and Light of men, gives to every man that is born into the world; and which serves to detect the Quakers notion of the *light within*, which every man has, and is no other than the light of a natural conscience; and shews how much men, even natural men, are obliged to Christ; and how great a person he is, and how deserving of praise, honour, and glory. The phrase, *every man that cometh into the world*, is Jewish, and often to be met with in Rabbinical writings, and signifies all men that are born into the world; the instances are almost innumerable; take one or two: on those words in *Job xxv. 3. On whom doth not his light arise?* It is asked (a), Who is he that cometh, "מכל באי עולם" "of all that come into the world;" and says, the sun hath "not lightened me by day, nor hath the moon lightened me by night? Thou enlightenest those above, and those below, and all that come into the world." Again, God is introduced thus speaking (b): "I am the God, לכול באי עולם" "of all that come into the world;" and I have not "united my name, but to the people of Israel." Once more (c), "Moses, our master, from the mouth of power, (that is, God; see *Matt. xxvi. 64.*) commanded to oblige, את כל באי העולם" "all that come into the world;" to receive the commandments which were commanded the sons of Noah."

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

In the world, &c.] This is to be understood, not of his incarnation; for the word *was* denotes past existence in the world, even all the time past from the creation of the world; and the *world* intends the world in general, as opposed to Judea, and the people of the Jews in the next verse; besides, the incarnation of the Word is spoken of in

ψ. 14. as a new and distinct thing from this: but of his being in the world when first made, and since, by his essence, by which he fills the whole world; and by his power, upholding and preserving it; and by his providence, ordering and managing all the affairs of it, and influencing and governing all things in it: he was in it as the life and light of it, giving natural life and light to creatures in it, and filling it, and them, with various blessings of goodness; and he was in the promise and type before, as well as after the Jews were distinguished from other nations, as his peculiar people; and he was frequently visible in the world, in an human form, before his incarnation, as in Eden's garden to our first parents, to Abraham, Jacob, Manoah and his wife, and others.

And the world was made by him.] So Philo the Jew often ascribes the making of the world to the *Logos*, or Word, as before observed on ψ. 3. and this regards the whole universe, and all created beings in it, and therefore cannot design the new creation: besides, if all men in the world were anew created by Christ, they would know him; for a considerable branch of the new creation lies in knowledge; whereas, in the very next clause it is asserted, that *the world knew him not*; and they would also love him, and obey him, which the generality of the world do not; they would appear to be in him, and so not to be condemned by him, as multitudes will. To understand this of the old creation, best suits the context, and proves the Deity of Christ, and his pre-existence as the Word and Son of God, to his incarnation.

And the world knew him not.] That is, the inhabitants of the world knew him not as their creator, nor did they acknowledge the mercies they received from him; nor did they worship, serve, and obey him; or love and fear him; nor did they, the greater part of them, know him as the Messiah, Mediator, Saviour, and Redeemer. There was, at first, a general knowledge of Christ throughout the world, among all the sons of Adam, after the first promise of him; and which, for a while, continued; but this, in process of time, being neglected and slighted, it was forgot, and utterly lost, as to the greater part of mankind; for the Gentiles, for many hundreds of years, as they knew not the true God, so they were without Christ, without any notion of the Messiah; and this their ignorance, as it was first their sin, became their punishment.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

He came, &c.] Not to all the world, who are his own by right of creation; for these, his own, are opposed to the world, and distinguished from them; and

(a) *Vajikra Rabba*, §. 31. fol. 171. 4.

(b) *Midrash Ruth*, c. 1. v. 1. fol. 27. 3.

(c) *Mai. n. n. Hich. Melakim*, c. 8. §. 10. *Vid. Miso. Rosh-hahana*, c. 1. §. 2. *T. Hieros. Sanhedrim*, fol. 25. 4. & 26. 3. *Sepher Bahir apud Zohar in Gen.* fol. 30. 3. *Tzeror Hammor*, fol. 21. 2. & 22. 3. & 24. 3. & 27. 2. *Caphtor*, fol. 56. 1. *Jarchi in Exod.* 15; 2.

and his coming to them designs some particular favour, which is not vouchsafed to all: nor yet are the elect of God intended; though they are Christ's own, in a very special sense; they are his by his own choice, by his Father's gift, by his own purchase, and through the conquest of his grace, and are the objects of his special love; and for their sake he came in the flesh, and to them he comes in a spiritual way, and to them will he appear a second time at the last day unto salvation: but they cannot be meant, because when he comes to them they receive him; whereas these did not, as the next clause affirms; but by *his own* are meant the whole body of the Jewish nation; so called, because they were chosen by the Lord above all people; had distinguishing favours bestowed upon them, as the adoption, the covenants, the promises, the giving of the law, and the service of God; and had the Shekinah, and the symbol of the divine presence in a remarkable manner among them; and the promise of the Messiah was in a particular manner made to them; and indeed, he was to be born of them, so that they were his kindred, his people, and his own nation: and this his coming to them is to be understood, not of his incarnation; though when he came in the flesh, as he came of them, so he came to them, particularly being *sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*, and was rejected by them as the Messiah; yet his incarnation is afterwards spoken of in *Y. 14.* as a new and distinct thing from this; and to understand it of some coming of his before his incarnation, best suits with the context, and the design of the Evangelist. Now Christ, the Word, came to the Jews before his incarnation, not only in types, personal and real, and in promises and prophecies, and in the word and ordinances, but in person; as to Moses in the bush, and gave orders to deliver the children of Israel out of Egypt: he came and redeemed them himself, with a mighty hand and a stretched-out arm; in his love and pity he led them through the red sea as on dry ground; and through the wilderness in a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night; and he appeared to them at mount Sinai, who gave unto them the lively oracles of God:

And his own received him not. They did not believe in him, nor obey his voice; they rebelled against him, and tempted him often, particularly at *Massah* and *Meribah*, they provoked him to anger, and vexed and grieved his holy Spirit; as they afterwards slighted and despised his Gospel by the prophets. Of this non-reception of the Word by the Jews, and their punishment for it, the Targumist on *Hosea ix. 17.* thus speaks: "My God will remove them far away, because, לֹא קִבְּלוּ לֵאמֹר קִבְּלוּ "they receive not his Word;" and "they shall wander among the people." And so

they treated this same *Logos*, or Word of God, when he *was made flesh, and dwelt among them*. Somewhat remarkable is the following discourse of some Jews among themselves (e): "When the Word of God comes, who is his messenger, we shall honour him. Says R. Saul, Did not the prophets come, and we slew them, and shed their blood? (compare this with *Matt. xxiii. 30, 31, 37.*) How therefore נִקְבַּל מְדַבְּרוֹ "shall we receive his Word?"

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

But as many, &c.] This is explained, in the latter part of the text, by *believing* in his name; for faith is the receiving him as the Word, and Son of God, as the Messiah, Saviour, and Redeemer; a receiving grace out of his fulness, and every blessing from him, as a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified; for though the generality rejected him, there were some few that received him:

To them gave he power to become the sons of God.] As such were very early called, in distinction from the children of men, or of the world; see *Gen. vi. 2, 4.* To be the sons of God is a very special favour, a great blessing, and high honour: saints indeed are not in so high a sense the sons of God, as Christ is; nor in so low a sense, as angels and men in common are; nor in such sense as civil magistrates; nor merely by profession of religion; much less by natural descent: but by adopting grace: and in this, Christ, the Word, has a concern, as all the three divine persons have. The Father predestinated men to the adoption of children, secures this blessing for them in the covenant of his grace, and puts them among the children, and assigns them a goodly heritage: the Spirit, and who is therefore called *the Spirit of adoption*, discovers and applies this blessing to them, and witnesses to their spirits that they are the children of God: and Christ, the Word, or Son of God, not only espoused their persons, and in time assumed their nature, and by the redemption of them opened a way for their reception of the adoption of children; but actually bestows upon them the power, as it is here called, of *becoming the sons of God*: by which is meant, not a power of free-will to make themselves the sons of God, if they will make use of it; but it signifies the honour and dignity conferred on such persons: so Nonnus calls it, "the heavenly honour;" as indeed, what can be a greater?

(e) Ben Arama in *Gen. xlvii. 4.* apud Gellatin. de Arcan. Cathol. Ver. 1. 3. c. 5.

greater? It is more honourable than to be a son or daughter of the greatest potentate on earth: and it is expressive of its being a privilege; for so it is an undeserved and distinguishing one, and is attended with many other privileges; for such are of God's household and family, and are provided for by him; have liberty of access unto him; are Christ's free men, and are heirs to an incorruptible inheritance. This is a privilege that excels all others, even justification and remission of sins; and is an everlasting one: and it also intends the open right which believers have unto this privilege, and their claim of it: hence it follows,

Even to them that believe in his name] That is, in himself, in Christ, the Word: the phrase is explanatory of the former part of the verse, and is a descriptive and manifestative character of the sons of God; for though the elect of God, by virtue of electing grace, and the covenant of grace, are the children of God before faith; and were so considered in the gift of them to Christ, and when he came into the world to gather them together, and save them; and so, antecedent to the Spirit of God being sent down into their hearts, to make this known to them; yet no man can know his adoption, nor enjoy the comfort of it, nor claim his interest in it, until he believes.

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Not of blood, &c.] Or *bloods*, in the plural number. The birth, here spoken of is regeneration, expressed by a being born again, or from above; by a being quickened by the Spirit and grace of God; by Christ being formed in men; and by a partaking of the divine nature; and by being made new creatures, as all that believe in the name of Christ are; and which is the evidence of their being the sons of God: and now this is owing not to blood, or bloods; not to the blood of circumcision; nor of the passover, which the Jews had an high opinion of, and ascribe life and salvation to, and to which notion this may be opposed: so their commentators (*f*) on *Ezekiel* xvi. 6. where the word *live* is twice used, observe on the first *live*, by the blood of the passover, on the second *live*, by the blood of circumcision; but, alas! these contribute nothing to the life of the new creature: nor is regeneration owing to the blood of ancestors, to natural descent, as from Abraham, which the Jews valued themselves upon; for sin, and not grace, is conveyed by natural generation: all men are of one blood, and that is tainted with sin, and

therefore can never have any influence on regeneration; no blood is to be valued, or any one upon it, but *the blood of Christ which cleanses from all sin*.

Nor of the will of the flesh] Man's free-will, which is carnal and corrupt, is enmity to God, and impotent to every thing that is spiritually good: regeneration is ascribed to another will and power, even to the will and power of God, and denied of this: *Man's will is carnal and corrupt, and is enmity to God, and impotent to every thing that is spiritually good*.

Nor of the will of man] Of the best of men, as Abraham, David, and others; who, though ever so willing and desirous that their children, relations, friends, and servants, should be born again, be partakers of the grace of God, and live in his light, yet cannot effect any thing of this kind: all that they can do, is to pray for them, give advice, and bring them under the means of grace; but all is ineffectual without a divine energy. So with the Jews, *וְאִם אִישׁ אֶחָד* "a man," signifies a great man; in opposition to Adam or Enoch, which signify a mean, weak, frail man: and our translators have observed this distinction in *Isaiah* ii. 9. *And the mean man (Adam) boweth down, and the great man (Isa) humbleth himself*. On which Jarchi has this note, *Adam boweth down*, that is, little men; and *a man humbleth himself*, that is, princes and mighty men, men of power: and so Kimchi on *Psalms* iv. 2. *O ye sons of men*, observes, that the Psalmist calls them the sons of men, with respect to the great men of Israel; for there were with Absalom the sons of great men. Though sometimes the Jews say (*g*), "Adam is greater than any of the names of men; as Geber, Enoch, Ith." But now, our Evangelist observes, let a man be ever so great, or good, or eminent for gifts and grace, he cannot communicate grace to another, or to whom he will; none are born again of any such will.

But of God] Of God, the Father of Christ, who begets to a lively hope; and of the Son, who quickens whom he will; and of the grace of the Spirit, to whom regeneration is generally ascribed.

14 ¶ And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

The Word was made flesh, &c.] The same Word, of whom so many things are said in the preceding verses; and is no other than the Son of God, or second person in the Trinity; for neither the Father, nor the Holy Ghost, were made flesh, as is here said of the Word, but the Son only; and *flesh*, here signifies, not a part of the body, nor the whole body only, but the whole human nature,

(*f*) Jarchi & Kimchi in loc. *Shemot Rabba*, §. 19. fol. 103. 2. & 104. 4. & *Mattinot Cehuna* in *Vajikra Rabba*, §. 23. fol. 164. 2. *Zohar* in *Lev.* fol. 39. 2.

(*g*) *Zohar* in *Lev.* fol. 20. 2.

ture, consisting of a true body, and a reasonable soul; and is so called, to denote the frailty of it, being encompassed with infirmities, though not sinful; and to shew, that it was a real human nature, and not a phantom, or appearance, that he assumed: and when he is said to be *made flesh*, this was not done by the change of one nature into another, the divine into the human, or the Word into a man; but by the assumption of the human nature, the Word taking it into personal union with himself; whereby the natures are not altered; Christ remained what he was, and became what he was not: nor are they confounded and blended together, and so make a third nature; nor are they separated and divided, so as to constitute two persons, a divine person, and an human person; but are so united as to be but one person: and this is such an union as can never be dissolved, and is the foundation of the virtue and efficacy of all Christ's works and actions, as mediator.

And dwelt among us] Or, "tabernacled among us;" in allusion to the tabernacle, which was a type of Christ's human nature: the model of the tabernacle was of God, and not of man; it was coarse without, but full of holy things within: here God dwelt, granted his presence, and his glory was seen; here the sacrifices were brought, offered, and accepted. So the human nature of Christ was of God's pitching, and not man's; and though it looked mean without, the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in it, as well as a fulness of grace and truth: in the face of Christ the glory of God is seen, and through him, even the veil of his flesh, saints have access unto him, and enjoy his presence; and by him their spiritual sacrifices become acceptable to God: or this is observed, in allusion to the feast of tabernacles, when the Jews dwelt in booths, in remembrance of their manner of living in the wilderness: the feast of tabernacles was typical of Christ, and of his tabernacling in our nature. Solomon's temple, which was also a type of Christ, was dedicated at the time of that feast; and it seems probable, that our Lord was born at that time; for as he suffered at the time of the passover, which had respect unto him, and the pouring forth of the Spirit was on the very day of pentecost, which that prefigured; so it is highly probable, that Christ was born at the time of the feast of tabernacles, which pointed out his dwelling among us; and is therefore very pertinently hinted at, when mention is here made of his incarnation. However, reference is manifestly had to the Shekinah, and the glory of it, in the tabernacle and temple; and almost the very word is here used. The Targumists sometimes speak of the Shekinah of the Word dwelling among the Israelites: so Onkelos in *Numbers* xi. 20. where the Israelites are threatened with

flesh till they lothe it; because, says the paraphrast, "Ye have lothed the Word of the Lord, whose Shekinah dwelleth among you." Jonabon Uzziel, on the same place, expresses it thus; "Because ye have lothed the Word of the Lord, the glory of whose Shekinah dwelleth among you." And it follows here,

And we beheld his glory] The glory of his divine nature; which is essential to him, and undivided, is equal to the Father's glory, is transcendent to all creatures, and is ineffable, and incomprehensible; some breakings-forth of which there were in his incarnate state, and which were observed by the Evangelist and his companions; who in various instances saw plainly, that Christ was possessed of divine perfections, such as omniscience and omnipotence; since he knew the thoughts of the heart, and could do the things he did: his Father declared him to be his beloved Son; and the miracles he wrought, and the doctrines he taught, manifested forth his glory. And not only there were some beams of his glory, at his transfiguration, which were seen by the apostles, among which the Evangelist John was one, and to which he may have here a particular reference; but even at his apprehension and death, and especially at his resurrection from the dead. The Jews speak of the glory of the Messiah to be seen in the world to come. They say (*b*), "If a man is worthy of the world to come, (that is, the times of the Messiah,) he shall see the glory of the King Messiah." And of Moses, they say (*i*), "There was (or will be) no generation like that in which he lived, until the generation in which the King Messiah comes, which shall behold the glory of the holy, blessed God, as he." This our Evangelist, and the other disciples of Christ, have seen:

The glory as of the only-begotten of the Father] A glory becoming him, suitable to him as such; the very real glory of the Son of God; for the *as*; here, is not a note of similitude, but of certainty, as in *Matt. xiv. 5. Psalm ii. 8.* and the Word is here called, *the only-begotten of the Father*; which cannot be said of Christ, as man; for as such, he was not *begotten* at all; nor on the account of his resurrection from the dead; for so he could not be called the *only-begotten*, since there are others that have been, and millions that will be raised from the dead, besides him: nor by reason of adoption; for if *adopted*, then not *begotten*; these two are inconsistent. Besides, he could not be called the *only-begotten*, in this sense, because there are many adopted sons, even all the elect of God: nor by virtue of his office, as magistrates are called the sons

(b) Gloss. in T. Beracot, fol. 58, 1. (i) Zohar in Lev. fol. 9, 4.

sons of God; for then he would be so only in a figurative and metaphorical sense, and not properly; whereas he is called God's own Son; the Son of the same nature with him; and, as here, *the only-begotten of the Father*, begotten by him in the same nature, in a way inconceivable and inexpressible by us:

Full of grace and truth] That is, he dwelt among men, and appeared to have a fulness of each of these: for this clause is not to be joined with the glory of the only begotten, as if this was a branch of that; but regards him as incarnate, and in his office, as mediator; who, as such, was *full of grace*; the Spirit, and the gifts of the Spirit; of all the blessings of grace, of justifying, pardoning, adopting, sanctifying, and persevering grace; of all the promises of grace; of all light, life, strength, comfort, peace, and joy: and also of *truth*, of all Gospel-truths; and as he had the truth, the sum, and substance of all the types and prophecies concerning him in him; and as he fulfilled all his own engagements, and his Father's promises; and as, possessed of sincerity towards men, and faithfulness and integrity to God.

15 ¶ John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me, is preferred before me; for he was before me.

John bare witness of him, &c.] Which was his office and business, for which purpose he was sent, *ch. 6-8.*

And cried] This agrees with his work and office, according to the prophecy of him in *Isaiah xl. 3.* and with the time of his ministry, the year of jubilee; and with the nature of his ministry, which was clear, open, and public; and performed with vigour, and in a powerful manner; with much assurance and certainty, with boldness and intrepidity, and with great zeal and fervency, and in an Evangelical way; for it was such a cry as debased the creature, and exalted Christ:

This was he of whom I spake] When he first entered upon his ministry and baptism, before he saw Christ, or baptized him; see *Matt. iii. 11.*

He that cometh after me] For Christ came into the world after John; he was born six months after him; he came after him to be baptized by him, and attended on his ministry; and came later into the public ministry than he did:

Is preferred before me] By God the Father, in setting him up as Mediator; constituting him the Head of the Church; causing a fulness of grace to dwell in him; appointing him the Saviour of his people; and ordaining him Judge of quick and dead. And by the prophets, who spake much of

him, and sparingly of John; and of him as the Messiah and Saviour, and of John only as his har-binger: and by John himself, who represents him as coming from above, and as above all; and himself as of the earth, earthly: and by all Gospel-ministers, and every true believer; and good reason there is for it:

For he was before me] Which cannot be meant of honour and dignity; for this is expressed before; and it would be proving one thing by the same: nor of his birth, as man; for John in that sense was before him, being born before him; besides, being born before another, is no proof of superior worth; others were born before John, whom he yet excelled: but of his eternal existence, as the Word, and Son of God, who was before John, or any of the prophets; before Abraham, and Noah, and Adam, or any creature whatever. The Arabic and Persian versions read, "for he was more ancient than me;" being from everlasting, *from the beginning, or ever the earth was.*

16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

Of his fulness have all we received, &c.] These are the words, not of John the Baptist, but of the Evangelist, carrying on his account of Christ, after he had inserted the testimony of the Baptist, in connexion with *ch. 14.* where he is said to be *full of grace and truth*; and which fulness is here intended; for the fulness of the Godhead in him is incommunicable; and the fulness of his fitness, and ability for his office, as mediator, was for himself; but his fulness of grace and truth is dispensatory, and is in him, on purpose to be communicated unto others: and of it, the Evangelist says, *have all we received*; not all mankind, though they all receive natural light and life from him; nor merely all the prophets of the Old Testament, though they had their gifts and grace from him, who then was, as now, the head of the church; nor only all the apostles of Christ, though these may be principally intended; but all believers, who, though they have not all the same measure of grace, nor the same gifts, yet all have received something: nor is their any reason for discouragement, envy, or reproach. Faith is the hand which receives Christ, and grace from him; and the act of receiving, being expressed in the past tense, seems to regard, first conversion, when faith is first wrought, and along with it abundance of grace is received; for a believer has nothing but what is given him, and what he has, is in a way of receiving; so that there is no room for boasting, but great reason for thankfulness, and much encouragement to apply to Christ for more grace, which is the thing received, as follows:

And

And grace for grace] According to the different senses of the preposition *על*, different interpretations are given of this passage; as that signifies a substitution of a person, or thing, in the room of another, the sense is thought to be, the Gospel, instead of the law; or the grace of the present dispensation, instead of the grace of the former dispensation; grace, different from the former grace, as Nonnus expresses it. If it design the original, and moving cause, the meaning is, grace is for the sake of grace; for there is no other cause of electing, justifying, pardoning, adopting, and regenerating grace, and even eternal life, but the grace, or free favour of God: and the one is the reason why the other is received: if it signifies the end, or final cause, then it is explained in this way; the disciples received the grace of apostleship, or gifts of grace, in order to preach the Gospel of the grace of God, and for the implanting and increasing grace in men; and grace also, in this life, is received in order to the perfection of grace, or glory, in the other: if it denotes the measure or proportion of a thing, as one thing is answerable to another, then it may be interpreted after this manner; the saints receive grace from the fulness of Christ, according, or answerable to the grace that is in him; or according to the measure of the gift of Christ, and in proportion to the place, station, and office they bear in the church. Some think the phrase only designs the freeness of grace, and the free and liberal manner in which it is distributed, and received; along with which, I also think, the abundance of it, at first conversion, with all after supplies, is intended; and that *grace for grace*, is the same with *grace upon grace*, heaps of grace; and that the phraseology is the same with this Jewish one (*ל*) *טוב על טוב* “goodness upon that goodness,” an additional goodness; so here, *grace upon grace*, an abundance of it; an addition to it, and an increase of it: so *חור על חור* (*l*) “joy upon joy;” is an abundance of joy, a large measure of it: and “holiness upon holiness (*m*),” abundance of it.

17 For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

The law was given by Moses, &c.] Both *moral* and *ceremonial*. The *moral* law was given to Adam, in innocence, which having been broken, and almost lost out of the minds and memories of men, was given by Moses, in a new edition of it, in writing; and points out what is man's duty, both to God and men; discovers sin, accuses of it, convicts of it, and condemns for it: nor could it

give strength to perform its demands; nor does it give the least hint of forgiveness; nor will it admit of repentance: and hence is opposed to *grace*; though it was a benefit to men, being in its own nature good and useful in its effects. The *ceremonial* law pointed out the pollution of human nature, the guilt and punishment of sin; was a type and shadow of deliverance by Christ, but could not give the grace it shadowed; and therefore is opposed both to *grace* and *truth*. Now both these were given by Moses to the people of the Jews, not as the maker, but the minister of them: it was God who appointed each of these laws, and ordained them in the hand of the mediator, Moses; who received them from him, by the disposition of angels, and delivered them to the people of Israel: and a very high office this was he was put into, and a very great honour was conferred upon him: but Jesus Christ is a far greater person, and in an higher office.

But grace and truth came by Jesus Christ] By *grace and truth*, is meant the Gospel, in opposition to the Law; which is called *grace*, because it is a declaration of the love and grace of God to men; it ascribes salvation, in all the parts of it, to the free grace and favour of God; and is the means of implanting and increasing grace in the hearts of men. And *truth*, not only because it contains truth, and nothing but truth, it coming from the God of truth; and the substance of it being Christ, who is the truth; and being revealed, applied, and led into by the Spirit of truth; but because it is the truth of the types, and the substance of the shadows of the law: or these two may mean distinct things; *grace* may design all the blessings of grace which are in Christ, and come by him; and *truth*, the promises, and the fulfilment of them, which are *all yea, and amen, in Christ*: and when these are said to be by him, the meaning is, not that they are by him as an instrument, but as the author of them; for Christ is the author of the Gospel, and the fulfiller of the promises, and *the giver of all grace*; which shews the superior excellency of Christ to Moses, and to all men, and even to angels also.

18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*.

Hath seen God at any time, &c.] That is, God the Father, whose voice was never heard, nor his shape seen by angels or men; for though Jacob, Moses, the elders of Israel, Manoah and his wife, are said to *see God*, and Job expected to see him with his bodily eyes, and the saints will see him as he is, in which will lie their great happiness; yet all seems to be understood of the second person,

X x

who

(*l*) Zohar in Exod. fol. 45. 1.

& in Num. fol. 69. 2. & 71. 2.

& in Numb. fol. 61. 1.

(*l*) Ibid. in Lev. fol. 28. 1

(*m*) Ibid fol. 40. 3.

who frequently appeared to the Old-Testament-saints in an human form; and will be seen by the saints in heaven, in his real human nature; or of God in and by him: for the essence of God is invisible, and not to be seen with the eyes of the body; nor indeed with the eyes of the understanding, so as to comprehend it; nor immediately, but through and by certain means: God is seen in the works of creation and providence, in the promises, and in his ordinances; but above all, in Christ, *the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person*. This may chiefly intend here, man's not knowing any thing of God in a spiritual and saving way, but in and by Christ; since it follows,

The only-begotten Son] The Word that was with God in the beginning. The Jerusalem Targum on *Genesis* iii. 22. says almost the same of the Word of the Lord, as here; where it introduces him saying, "The Word of the Lord God said, 'Lo, the man whom I created, the only one in my world, even as I am, *היחיד* 'the only one,' (or, as the word is sometimes rendered, 'the only begotten') in the highest heavens." And to the same purpose the Targum of Jonathan, and also Jarchi, on the same place. The Syriac version here renders it, "the only begotten, God" "which is in the bosom of the Father;" clearly shewing, that he is the only begotten, as he is God: the phrase, *which is in the bosom of the Father*, denotes unity of nature and essence in the Father and Son; their distinct personality; strong love, and affection between them; the Son's acquaintance with his Father's secrets; his being at that time, as the Son of God, in the bosom of his Father, when here on earth as the Son of man; and which qualified him to make the declaration of him:

He hath declared him] The Persian and Ethiopic versions further add, *to us*; he has clearly and fully declared his nature, perfections, purposes, promises, counsels, covenant, word, and works; his thoughts and schemes of grace; his love and favour to the sons of men; his mind and will concerning the salvation of his people: he has made, and delivered a fuller revelation of these things, than ever was yet; and to which no other revelation in the present state of things will be added. Somewhat like this the Jews (*n*) say of the Messiah; "There is none that can declare the name of his Father, and that knows him; but this is hid from the eyes of the multitude, until he comes; *וְיִגְדֵּל* "and he shall declare him." He is come, and has declared him: so

Philo speaks of the *Logos*, or Word, as the interpreter of the mind of God, and a teacher of men (*o*).

19 ¶ And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?

This is the record of John, &c.] The Evangelist proceeds to give a large, and full account of the testimony John the Baptist bore to Christ, which he had hinted at before, and had signified was his work, and office, and the end of his being sent.

When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?] The Jews that sent were the great sanhedrim that sat at Jerusalem, whose business it was to inquire into, examine, and try prophets, whether true or false (*p*); and John appearing as a prophet, and being so esteemed by the people, they deputed messengers to him to interrogate him, and know who he was. The persons sent were very likely of their own body, since priests and Levites were in that council. For it is said (*q*), "They do not constitute, or appoint in the sanhedrim but priests, Levites, and Israelites, who have their genealogies." And it is commanded, that there should be in the great sanhedrim priests and Levites, as it is said, *Deut. xvii. 9. And thou shalt come unto the priests, the Levites, &c.* and if they are not to be found, though they are all Israelites, (not of the tribe of Levi) it is right." Such a sanhedrim is a lawful one; but priests and Levites, if such could be found, that had proper qualifications, were to be admitted in the first place. A message from so august an assembly, at so great a distance, (for Jordan was a day's journey distant from Jerusalem (*r*); according to Josephus (*s*), it was 210 furlongs, or 26 miles and a quarter) and by the hands of persons of such character and figure, was doing John a great deal of honour, and serves to make his testimony of Christ the more public and remarkable; and it also shews what a noise John's ministry and baptism made among the Jews, that it even reached Jerusalem, and the great council of the nation; and likewise the question put to him, which by John's answer seems to intimate as if it was thought he was the Messiah, shews the opinion that was entertained of him, and even the sanhedrim might not be without thoughts this way: and the question they put by their messengers might not be, as some have thought, to ensnare John, nor out of disrespect to Jesus, who, as yet,

was

(a) De nominum mutat. p. 1047.

(p) Maim. Sanhedrim, c. 1. §. 5.

(q) Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrim, c. 2. §. 1, 2.

(r) Maim. Maaser Sheni, c. 5. §. 2. Juchasin, fol. 65. 2. Jarchi in Isa. xxiv. 16.

(s) De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 4.

(n) R. Moses Haderon in Psal. 85. 11. apud Galatin, de Arcan. Cathol. ver. l. 3. c. 2.

was not made manifest; but might be in good earnest, having from many circumstances reason to think there might be something in the peoples opinion of him; since, though the government was not wholly departed from Judah, yet they could not but observe it was going away apace, an Idumean having been upon the throne for some years, placed there by the Roman senate; and now the government was divided among his sons, by the same order. Daniel's weeks, they could not but see, were just accomplishing; and besides, from the uncommon appearance John made, the austerity of his life, the doctrine of remission of sins he preached, and the new ordinance of baptism he administered, they might be ready to conclude he was the person.

20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

He freely, and without any reserve, declared, and in the plainest and strongest terms professed to the messengers, before all the people, that he was not the Messiah; nor did he retract his confession, or draw in his words again, or drop any thing that looked doubtful or suspicious;

But confessed, I am not the Christ] He stood to it, and insisted on it, that he was not that illustrious person; nor had they any reason to entertain such an opinion of him; nor would he have them do so; they might assure themselves he was not the Christ.

21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.

Art thou Elias? &c.] "Elijah, the prophet; the Tishbite, as Nonnus in his paraphrase expresses it; who was translated, soul and body, to heaven." The Jews had a notion that that prophet would come in person a little before the coming of the Messiah; see the note on *Matt. xvii. 10.* wherefore these messengers inquire, that since he had so fully satisfied them that he was not the Messiah, that he would as ingenuously answer to this question, if he was Elias, or no:

And he saith, I am not] That is, he was not Elijah the prophet that lived in Ahab's time, and was called the Tishbite; for John's answer is to the intention of their question, and their own meaning in it, and is no contradiction to what Christ says of him, *Matt. xi. 14.* "that he was the Elias that was to come," for he was the person meant by him in *Mal. iv. 5.* though not in the sense the Jews understood it; nor is it any contradiction to what the angel said to Zacharias, *Luke i. 17.* for he does not say that John should come in the body, but in the power and spirit of Elias; see the note on *Matt. xi. 14.*

Art thou that prophet] Jeremiah, whom some of the Jews (1) have thought to be the prophet Moses, spoke of in *Deuteronomy xviii. 15.* and expected that he would appear about the times of the Messiah; see *Matt. xvi. 14.* or any one of the ancient prophets risen from the dead, which they also had a notion of, *Luke ix. 8, 19.* or, as it may be rendered, *Art thou a prophet?* for prophecy had long ceased with them:

And he answered, No] He was not Jeremiah, nor any one of the old prophets risen from the dead, nor a prophet in the sense they meant: he was not like one of the prophets of the Old Testament; he was a prophet, and more than a prophet, as Christ says, *Matt. xi. 9.* yet not such a prophet as they were; his prophesying lay not so much in predicting future events, as in pointing out Christ, and preaching the doctrine of the remission of sins by him.

22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

Who art thou? &c.] Since, as yet, he had only answered in negatives, who he was not, that he was not the Christ, nor Elias, nor that prophet; they desire he would give them a positive account who he was:

That we may give an answer to them that sent us] That their labour might not be in vain; that they might not come so far for nothing, without knowing who he was; and that they might be capable of giving an account of him to the sanhedrim:

What sayest thou of thyself?] They insisted on it, that he would openly and honestly declare who he was, and what was his office and business; that from his own mouth, and not from the opinion and conjectures of others, they might represent him in a true light to those who had deputed them on this errand.

23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.

The voice of one crying in the wilderness, &c.] These words are cited by the other Evangelists, and applied to John the Baptist; but then they are only to be considered as their citation, and as an application of them to him by them: but here they are used by John himself, who both expresses them, and interprets them of himself; and in which he was undoubtedly under the infallible direction of the blessed Spirit; and which confirms the sense of the Evangelists, who apply the words to him.

The

(1) Baal Hatturim in Deut. xviii. 15. Tzeror Hammer, fol. 127. 4. & 143. 4. Siphre in Jarchi in Jer. i. 5.

The Jews give a different interpretation of the words; though one of their celebrated commentators (*u*) owns, that the comforts spoken of in the preceding verses are what will be in the days of the king Messiah: one of them (*w*) interprets, *the voice*, of the Holy Ghost; and so far it may be true, as John was filled with the Holy Ghost, and he spake by him in his ministry: and another (*x*), of the resurrection of the dead, or the voice that will be heard then, which will be the voice of the archangel: though another of (*y*) them better explains it by, הם המבשרים "they are they that bring" glad tidings, or good news; such are Gospel preachers; only it should have been in the singular number: for the text speaks but of one voice; of one person crying; and of John the Baptist, who brought the good news, and glad tidings, that the Messiah was coming, yea, that he was already come, and that *the kingdom of heaven was at hand*. The Hebrew writers generally understand the passage of the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, and of removing all obstructions in their way to Jerusalem; to which sense the Targum on the place inclines, which paraphrases it thus; "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way before the people of the Lord, 'make in the plain, paths before the congregation of our God.'" But not the people of the Lord, but the Lord himself, and not the congregation of God, but God himself, is intended; whose ways were to be prepared and made plain, even the king Messiah; which was to be done, and was done by his forerunner John the Baptist; who, with great modesty, expresses himself in the language of this scripture, as being a prophecy of him: he was *a voice*, but not a mere voice; nor was his ministry a mere voice of words, as the law was; but it was the sweet voice of the Gospel, proclaiming the coming of the Messiah; encouraging men to believe in him; calling them to evangelical repentance, and publishing remission of sins in the name of Christ, and pointing him out as the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world: this voice was *crying*; it was not a still small voice, it was a very loud one: John lifted up his voice like a trumpet; he delivered himself with great zeal and fervency; and it was

In the wilderness] Where this voice was heard, in the wilderness of Judea, as in *Matthew* iii. 1. where Jesus came preaching. The Ethiopic version renders the words, "I am the voice of one" that goes about in the wilderness; that is, in the several towns and villages which were in the wilderness, to whom John went and preached the

Gospel: the Persic version reads, "I am the voice" and cry which cometh out of the wilderness; referring to the place where he was before he entered on his public ministry, and from whence he came; for he *was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel*, *Luke* i. 80. The words, this voice cried, were,

Make straight the way of the Lord] He called upon persons to reform their ways, and walk in the way of the Lord, to repent of their sins, believe in Christ, and submit to the ordinance of baptism: the Ethiopic version reads, "the way" of God; and such was the person he came to prepare the way for, even the Son of God, and who is truly and properly God; X

As said the prophet Esaias] In *Isaiah* xl. 3. see the note on *Matthew* iii. 3.

24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees:

Who were the strictest sect of religion among the Jews; were very zealous of the traditions of the elders, and professed an expectation of the Messiah; and were famous in the nation for their knowledge and learning, as well as for their devotion and sanctity; and many of them were in the sanhedrim, as appears from *John* iii. 1. *Acts* xxiii. 6. see the note on *Matthew* iii. 7.

25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

They asked him, &c.] They put a question, by saying to him,

Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?] Since he denied that he was the Messiah, or Elias that was to come before the Messiah, according to the expectation of the Jews, or *that* prophet, or *a* prophet; they demand by what authority he introduced a new rite and ordinance among them, which they had never been used to; for though there were divers washings or baptisms among them, enjoined by the law of Moses in certain cases, and others which obtained by tradition; as the immersion of themselves after they had been at market, and of cups, pots, brazen vessels, and tables; yet nothing of this kind that John administered: and as for the baptism of proselytes, it seems to be of a later date than this, and had no manner of likeness to it. The ordinance John administered was such, as they apprehended that no one ought to practise, unless he was the Messiah, or his forerunner, or some eminent prophet; they insist upon it therefore, that since he denied he was either of these, that he would shew his credentials, and what commission

(u) Kimchi in *Isa.* xl. 1.
(w) Zohar in *Gen.* fol. 70. 4.

(x) Jarchi in *Isa.* xl. 3.
(y) Aben Ezra in *Isa.* ibid.

commission he had from God to baptize; or they suggest he was liable to be called to an account by their sanhedrim, and be condemned as a false prophet, or an innovator in religious affairs. From hence it appears, that the Jews expected that baptism would be administered in the times of the Messiah and his forerunner; but from whence they had this notion it is not easy to say, whether from *Zech. xiii. 1.* as Grotius, or from *Ezek. xxxvi. 25.* as Lightfoot thinks; nor do they speak contemptibly of it, but rather consider it as a very solemn affair, to be performed only by great personages: and this may teach modern ones to think and speak more respectfully of this ordinance than they do, who have given themselves great liberties, and have treated it with much contempt and virulence; calling it by the names of uncleanness, abomination, filthy water, and a devoting of persons to Satan (z): likewise, it is clear from hence, that they expected that this ordinance would be first administered by some person of very great note, either some very famous prophet, as Elias, whom they looked for before the coming of the Messiah, or else the Messiah himself; and not by a common teacher, or any ordinary person: wherefore this rite, as performed by John, could have no likeness with any thing that was in common use among them: besides, it was expressly done in the name of the Messiah, *Acts xix. 5.* therefore they conclude he, or his forerunner, must be come, and that John must be one or other of them, otherwise, why did he administer it? And it is also evident from hence, that no such practice had obtained before among them, or they would not have been alarmed at it, as they were; nor would they have troubled themselves to have sent after John, and inquire of him who he was, that should practise in this manner.

26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;

I baptize with water, &c.] Or "in water," so the Vulgate Latin and all the Oriental versions render it. The sense of the answer is, that he indeed baptized persons in water, which was all that he could do, or pretended to do; and he owned, that this was a new rite, and that he was the administrator of a new ordinance; but he suggests, as may be supplied from *Matthew iii. 11.* that there was one at hand, and even now among them, *that should baptize*, and so it is read in one of Stephens's copies here, *in the holy Ghost, and in fire*, and it was by his authority, by a commission he had received from him, that he baptized in water; and that his speedy manifestation and appearance as

the Messiah, which would be confirmed by his power of baptizing in the holy Ghost, and by his ministry and miracles, would be a sufficient vindication of his conduct, and support him in his administration of water-baptism:

But there standeth one among you.] Or "hath stood," as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; referring, not to his being among them at twelve years of age, but a few days ago when he came to John to be baptized; and was baptized by him: for from *y. 29.* it is plain, he was not now, or *to-day*, as Nonnus expresses it, standing in the midst of them. The Ethiopic version renders it, "there is one about to stand among you," as he did the next day: though the meaning of the phrase may only be, that he was then in being, and dwelt somewhere among them, and not that he was personally present at that time:

Whom ye know not.] Neither from whence he is, nor who he is, nor what is his work and office: neither the dignity of his person, nor the end of his coming into the world, nor the nature of his business in it.

27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

Who coming after me, &c.] Both into the world, and into the ministry of the word; for John was before Christ, in both these respects, though greatly behind him in others, and therefore he adds,

Is preferred before me.] Being not only of a more excellent nature, the Son of God, and of an higher extract, the Lord from heaven; but in an higher office, and having greater gifts, and the Spirit of God without measure on him; and also being more followed by the people; for John decreased, but he increased: or rather, the words may be rendered, "who was before me;" being the eternal Son of God, whose goings-forth were of old, from everlasting; who was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was; the first-born or first-bringer forth of every creature; and therefore must be before all things, which are created by him; see the note on *y. 15.*

Whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.] Which was one of the meanest services done by a servant to his master; see the note on *Matt. iii. 11.*

28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

These things were done, &c.] That is, this testimony was born by John; and this discourse passed between him and the Pharisees, at the place here mentioned; which was a passage over Jordan, where much people walked to go on the other side,

(z) Vet. Nizachon, p. 56, 62, 64, 70, 74, 77, 118, 191, 193.

Beyond Jordan; and where also John was baptizing] Which brought a great concourse of people together: so that this witness was born in a very public manner, and before a large number; and it is to this that Christ refers, in chapter v. 33. for this was so well known, that there was no hiding or denying it: the place where this conversation passed, is, in the Vulgate Latin, and all the Eastern versions, and in the Alexandrian copy, and many other copies, and so in Nonnus, called Bethany; but, as De Dieu observes, Bethany was not beyond Jordan, nor in the wilderness of Judea, but near to Jerusalem, about two miles distant from it; nor was it situated by waters convenient for baptizing; unless they went to the brook Cedron, which indeed was not far from it: but it is clear from the history, that John was not so near Jerusalem; nor did that brook, which might be forded over, continue the same learned author, seem fit and proper enough, *mergendis baptizandorum corporibus*, "for plunging the bodies of those that were to be baptized;" wherefore he rightly concludes, that either this reading is an error, or there was another Bethany near Jordan: Bethabara signifies, "the house of passage;" and is thought to be the place where the Israelites passed over Jordan, to go into the land of Canaan, *Josua* iii. 16, 17. And which, as it must be a very convenient place for the administration of baptism by immersion, used by John, so it was very significant of the use of this ordinance; which is, as it were, the passage, or entrance, into the Gospel-church-state; for persons ought first to be baptized, and then be admitted into a Gospel-church, according to the example of the primitive christians, *Acts* ii. 41. But whether there was a place of this name, where the Israelites went over Jordan, is not certain; and if there was, it does not seem so likely to be the place here designed, since that was right over-against Jericho: whereas this seems to be rather farther off, and over-against Galilee: there were several passages of Jordan, *Judges* xii. 5, 6. There was a bridge over it, between the lake of Samochon and Gennefaret, now called *Jacob's bridge*, where Jacob is supposed to have wrestled with the angel, and to have met with his brother Esau; and there was another over it at Chammath, near Tiberias, and in other places: and it might be at one of these passages, by which they went over into Galilee, that John pitched upon to continue preaching and baptizing at; partly because of the number of people that went over, to whom he had the opportunity of preaching; and partly, for the sake of baptizing those who became proper subjects of that ordinance, through his ministry. Some have thought, that this place is the same with *Bethabara*, in *Judges* vii. 24, which was either in the tribe

of Ephraim, or of Manasseh, and not far from the parts where this place must be, but was on this side Jordan; and so Beza says the words should be rendered; and those who came to John at Jordan, are not said to pass over that river: others are of opinion, that *Bethabara*, is the same with *Bethabab*, *Josb.* xv. 6, 61. since this is called *Bethabara* by the Septuagint, in *Josb.* xviii. 22. However, be it what place soever, and wheresoever, it was no doubt very proper for John's purpose; and therefore he chose it, and for a while continued at it: and here, says Jerom (a), "To this day many of the brethren, that is, of the number of believers desiring there to be born again, are baptized in the vital stream;" such veneration had they for the place where John first baptized. Origen says (b), "that in his time it was said, that Bethabara was shewed by the banks of Jordan, where they report John baptized."

29 ¶ The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!

Seeth Jesus coming unto him, &c.] Not to be baptized, for he had been baptized before by him. This seems to have been after Christ had been forty days in the wilderness, from whence he now returned, and came to attend on John's ministry; both to do honour to him, and that he might be made manifest by him; and this was the day after John had bore such a testimony concerning him, to the priests and Levites: and which Christ, the omniscient God, knew full well; and therefore came at this season, when the minds of the people were prepared by John's testimony, to expect and receive him: one part of the work of Elias, which the Jews assign unto him, and the precise time of his doing it, exactly agrees with this account of John the Baptist; they say (c), that "His work is to bring to them (the Israelites) the good news of the coming of the Redeemer; and this shall be, *מחר*," "one day," before the coming of the Messiah; and this is that which is written, "Behold I will send you Elias the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord," *Mal.* iv. 5." For John, the day before Christ came to him, had signified to the priests and Levites, that the Messiah was already come; and now on the day following, seeing him, pointed as with his finger to him,

And saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world! He calls him a lamb, either with

(a) De Locis Hebraicis, fol. 89. l.

(b) Comment. in Joannem, tom. 3. p. 131.

(c) R. Abraham ben David in Miso, Ediot, c. 2. §. 7.

with respect to any lamb in common, for his harmlessness and innocence; for his meekness and humility; for his patience; and for his usefulness, both for food and cloathing, in a spiritual sense; as well as for his being to become a sacrifice for the sins of his people: or else with respect to the lambs that were offered in sacrifice under the legal dispensation; and that either to the passover-lamb, or rather to the lambs of the daily sacrifice, that were offered morning and evening; since the account of them best agrees with what is said of this Lamb of God, who was slain in type, in the morning of the world, or from the foundation of the world; and actually in the evening of the world, or in the end of it; and who has a continued virtue to take away the sins of his people, from the beginning, to the end of the world; and their sins, both of the day and night, or which are committed every day: for as they are daily committed, there is need of the daily application of the blood and sacrifice of Christ, to remove them; or of continual looking unto him by faith, whose blood has a continual virtue to cleanse from all sin: the Jewish doctors say (d), that "The morning daily sacrifice, made atonement for the iniquities done in the night; and the evening sacrifice, made atonement for the iniquities that were by day;" and in various things they were typical of Christ, as that they were lambs of the first year, which may denote the weakness of the human nature of Christ, which had all the sinless infirmities of it; they were also without spot, signifying the purity of Christ's human nature, who was holy and harmless, a lamb without spot or blemish; these were offered as a sacrifice, and for the children of Israel only; as Christ has given himself an offering and a sacrifice to God, both in soul and body, for the sins of the mystical Israel of God, the Israel whom God has chosen for himself, whether Jews or Gentiles; for Christ is the propitiation for the sins of both: and these were offered daily, morning and evening; and though Christ was but once offered, otherwise he must have often suffered; yet as he has by one offering put away sin for ever, so there is a perpetual virtue in his sacrifice to take it away, and there is a constant application of it for that purpose. To which may be added, that these lambs were offered with fine flour, oil and wine, for a sweet savour to the Lord; denoting the acceptableness of the sacrifice of Christ to his Father, to whom it is for a sweet-smelling savour, Eph. v. 2. And Christ is stiled the Lamb of God, in allusion to the same, whom the cabalistic Jews (e) call the secret of the mystery, and, *אוריאל* "the lambs of

"God;" because God has a special property in him; he is his own Son; and because he is of his providing and appointing, as a sacrifice for sin, and is acceptable to him as such; and to distinguish him from all other lambs; and to give him the preference, since he does that which they could not do, *taketh away the sin of the world*: by the *sin of the world*, is not meant the sin, or sins of every individual person in the world; for some die in their sins, and their sins go beforehand to judgment, and they go into everlasting punishment for them; which could not be, if Christ took them away: rather, the sin which is common to the whole world, namely, original sin; but then it must be observed, that this is not the only sin Christ takes away; for he also takes away actual sins; and the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read in the plural, "the sins of the world;" and also that this he takes away only with respect to the elect; wherefore they are the persons intended by *the world*, as in *John vi. 33, 51.* whose sin, or sins, Christ takes away; and a peculiar regard seems to be had to the elect among the Gentiles, who are called *the world*, in distinction from the Jews, as in *John iii. 16.* 1 *John ii. 2.* and the rather, since the lambs of the daily sacrifice, to which the allusion is, were only offered for the sins of the Jews: but John here signifies, that the Lamb of God he pointed at, and which was the antitype of these lambs, not only took away the sins of God's people among the Jews, but the sins of such of them also as were among the Gentiles; and this seems to me to be the true sense of the passage. The phrase *taking away sin*, signifies a taking it up, as Christ did; he took it voluntarily upon himself, and became responsible to divine justice for it; and also a bearing and carrying it, for taking it upon himself, he bore it in his own body in the tree, and carried it away, as the scape-goat did under the law; and so likewise a taking it quite away: Christ has removed it as far as the east is from the west, out of sight, so as never to be seen any more; he has destroyed, abolished, and made an utter end of it: and this is expressed in the present tense, *taketh away*; to denote the continued virtue of Christ's sacrifice to take away sin, and the constant efficacy of his blood to cleanse from it, and the daily application of it to the consciences of his people; and which is owing to the dignity of his person, as the Son of God; and to his continual and powerful mediation and intercession: this must be a great relief to minds afflicted with the continual ebullitions of sin, which is taken away by the Lamb of God, as fast as it rises; and who, for that purpose, are called to behold, and wonder at, the love and grace of Christ in taking up, bearing, and taking away sin; and to look to him by faith continually for everlasting salvation;

(d) R. Menachem, fol. 215. apud Ainsworth, in Exod. xxi. 39.

(e) R. Mehimna, in Zohar in Lev. fol. 33. 2.

salvation; and love him, and give him the honour of it, and glorify him for it.

30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.

[He of whom it is said, &c.] Either the day be- as in *ψ*. 27. or some time before that, *ψ*. 15. when he first began to baptize, even before Christ came to be baptized by him, and before he personally knew him; see *Matt.* iii. 11, 13.

[After me cometh a man, &c.] Not a mere man, but the man God's fellow: and this is said, not be- cause he was now a grown man, or to shew the truth of his human nature; but seems to be a com- mon Hebraism; and is all one as if it had been said, "after me cometh one," or a certain person: for the sense of this phrase, and what follows, see the note on *ψ*. 15.

31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

[And I knew him not, &c.] Ουκ εγνων, "by sight," as Nonnus paraphrases it; personally he had never seen him, nor had had any conversation and fami- liarity with him; for though they were related to each other, yet lived at such a distance, as not to know one another, or have a correspondence with each other: John was in the deserts, *until the day of his shewing unto Israel*; and Christ dwelt with his parents at Nazareth, in a very mean and ob- scure manner, till he came from thence to Jordan to John, to be baptized by him; and which was the first interview they had: and this was so order- ed by providence, as also this is said by John, lest it should be thought, that the testimony he bore to Jesus, and the high commendation he gave of him, arose from the relation between them; or from a confederacy and compact they had entered into:

[But that he should be made manifest to Israel] Who had been for many years hid in Galilee, an obscure part of the world: and though he had been known to Joseph and Mary, and to Zacharias and Elisa- beth, and to Simeon and Anna; yet he was not made manifest to the people of Israel in common; nor did they know that the Messiah was come: but that he might be known,

[Therefore am I come baptizing with water] Or *in water*, as before: for by administering this new ordinance, the people were naturally put upon in- quiry after the Messiah, whether come, and where he was, since such a new rite was introduced; and besides, John, when he baptized any, exhorted them to believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus; and moreover, by Christ's

coming to his baptism, he came to have a personal knowledge of him himself, and so was capable of pointing him out, and making him manifest to others, as he did.

32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

[And John bare record, &c.] The same day that he said the above things, and at the same time:

[Saying, I saw the Spirit] That is, of God, as as is said in *Matthew* iii. 16. and which Nonnus here expresses; and the Ethiopic version reads, "the Holy Ghost:"

[Descending from heaven like a dove] At the time of his baptism; see the note on *Matthew* iii. 16.

[And it abode upon him] For some time; so long as that John had a full sight of it, and so was capable of giving a perfect account of it, and bearing a certain and distinct testimony to it.

33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit de- scending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

[And I knew him not, &c.] That is, before he came to be baptized by him; when it was secretly suggested to him who he was, and the following signal was given him, to confirm him in it:

[But he that sent me to baptize with water] Or *in water*; that is, God; for John's mission was from God, as in *ψ*. 6. and his baptism from heaven; he had a divine warrant and commission for what he did:

[The same said unto me] Either by an articulate voice, or by a divine impulse on his mind, or by the revelation of the Spirit:

[Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost] That is, the Messiah; see the notes on *Matthew* iii. 11, 16.

34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

[And I saw, &c.] The Spirit descending from heaven as a dove, and lighting upon Jesus, and remaining some time on him; this he saw with his bodily eyes:

[And bare record] At the same time, before all the people that were with him when he baptized Jesus:

[That this is the Son of God] The natural, essential, and eternal Son of God; who being sent in the fulness of time, had assumed the human nature, in which

which he became subject to all ordinances, and had the Spirit without measure bestowed on him; and which was an evidence who he was, and of what he came about.

35 ¶ Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples;

The third day from the priests and Levites having been with John, to know who he was. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, leave out the word again:

John stood, and two of his disciples] One of these was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, as appears from *v.* 40. and very likely the other was the Evangelist John, the writer of this Gospel, who always chooses to conceal himself. John the Baptist stood, and these disciples by him, in some certain place near Jordan, where he was preaching and baptizing.

36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

And looking, &c.] Walked, either by them; or as he was going from them to his lodgings; it being toward the close of the day, when John had finished his work for that day, and the people were departing home: John fixed his eyes intently on Christ, with great pleasure and delight, and pointing at him,

He saith, Behold the Lamb of God!] As in *v.* 29. where it is added, *which taketh away the sin of the world*; and which the Ethiopic version subjoins here.

37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

Speak the above words, and took notice of them; faith in Christ came by hearing them; they reached their hearts, and they found their affections, and the desires of their souls, to be after Christ:

And they followed Jesus] Left their master, and went after him, in order to get some acquaintance with him, and receive some instructions from him.

38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?

That is, "following him," as the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions add: he saw by their walk, and by their countenances, that they were following him; and which he knew before he turned himself: he knew what John had said, and what an effect it had upon these

disciples, and what was working in their hearts, and how desirous they were of coming up to him, and conversing with him; and therefore he turned himself, that they might have an opportunity of speaking to him; or rather, in order to speak to them first, as he did:

And saith unto them, What seek ye?] This he said, not as ignorant of whom, and what they were seeking, and desirous of; but to encourage them to speak to him, which, through fear and bashfulness, they might be backward to do; and therefore, he who will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, but cherishes and encourages the first motions of grace, begins first with them, and treats them in a free and familiar manner; thereby to animate and engage them to use freedom with him, and which end was answered:

They said unto him, Rabbi] A title which now began to be in much use with the Jews, and which they gave to their celebrated doctors; and these disciples of John, observing how magnificently their master spoke of Jesus, in great reverence to him, addressed him under this character; see the note on *Matthew* xxiii. 7.

Which is to say, being interpreted, Master] These are the words of the Evangelist, interpreting the word *Rabbi*, and not of the disciples, and are left out in the Syriac and Persic versions, who for *Rabbi*, read "our master, or our Rabbi;" being said by both the disciples, or by one in the name of both, putting the following question:

Where dwellest thou?] Signifying, that that was not a proper place, in the public way, to enter into a conversation with him, and acquaint him with what they were desirous of; but should be glad to know where he lodged, that they might wait upon him there, either then, or on the morrow, or at any convenient time.

39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.

Come and see, &c.] He gave the man invitation to go along with him directly, and see with their own eyes where he dwelt, and there and then converse with him, and at any other time; to which they had a hearty welcome:

They came and saw where he dwelt] They accepted of the invitation, and went along with him immediately, and saw, and took notice of the place where he had lodgings, that they might know it, and find it another time; which, Dr Lightfoot conjectures, was at Capernaum, which is very probable;

bable; since that was his own city, where he paid tribute, where he frequently resorted, and was on the banks of Jordan, near the lake of Genesaret; and these disciples were Galileans:

And abode with him that day] The remaining part of the day, which they spent in delightful conversation with him; by which they knew that he was the Messiah; at least they were better instructed in this matter, and more confirmed in it. The Arabic version renders it, "they remained with him that his own day;" and Dr Lightfoot thinks the next day is meant, and that it was the sabbath-day, which they kept with him in private devotion and conference:

For it was about the tenth hour] Which, according to the Roman way of reckoning, must be ten o'clock in the morning; so that there was a considerable part of the day before them; but according to the Jewish way of reckoning, who reckon twelve hours to a day, it must be four o'clock in the afternoon, when there were but two hours to night: and this being about the time when the lamb of the daily sacrifice of the evening was offered up, very seasonably did John point out unto them at this time, Christ the Lamb of God, the antitype of that sacrifice; for the daily evening-sacrifice was slain at eight and a half, and was offered at nine and a half (*f*), or between the ninth and tenth hours of the day. The Ethiopic version renders it, "they remained with him that day unto the tenth hour."

40 One of the two which heard John *speak*, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

Speak the above things, concerning Jesus being the Lamb of God:

And followed him] That is, "Jesus," as the Syriac and Arabic versions read; and the Persian version, "Christ;" and the Ethiopic version, "the Lord Jesus;" for not John, but Jesus they followed:

Was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother] See Matt. iii. 18. the other, as before observed, might be the writer of this Gospel.

41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

Findeth him, either before the other disciple, or before he found any other person: after he and the other disciple departed from Christ, being affected with the grace bestowed upon him, and his heart warm with the conversation he had had with him, and transported with joy at finding the Messiah,

goes in all haste in search of his relations, friends, and acquaintance, to communicate what he had seen and heard, in order to bring them to the knowledge of the same; for such is the nature of grace, it is very communicative, and those that have it, are very desirous that all others should be partakers of it; and the first person he lighted on was Simon, who was afterwards called *Peter*, who was his own brother; not a brother-in-law, but his own brother, by father and mother's side, and so dear unto him by the ties of nature and blood:

And saith unto him] With all eagerness imaginable, and in a rapture of joy:

We have found the Messiah] I, and a fellow disciple have had the Messiah, so often foretold by the prophets, and so long expected by our fathers, pointed out to us; and we have followed him, and have had conversation with him, and are well assured he is that illustrious person:

Which is, being interpreted, the Christ] Which, as in *y.* 38. are the words of the Evangelist, and not of Andrew, and are therefore left out in the Syriac version; the word *Messiah* needing no interpretation in that language; and which was the language in which Andrew spoke. This name *Messiah*, was well known among the Jews, for that great person who was promised, and they expected would come, as a Saviour and Redeemer; though it is not very often mentioned in the books of the Old Testament, chiefly in the following places, *Psalms* ii. 2. xviii. 50. lxxxix. 39, 51. *Daniel* ix. 25, 26. but it is very much used in the Chaldean paraphrases: Elias Levita (*g*) says, he found it in more than fifty verses; and Buxtorf (*h*) has added others to them, and the word appears in seventy-one places, which he takes notice of, and are worthy of regard; for they shew the sense of the ancient synagogue concerning the passages of the Old Testament, respecting the Messiah. This Hebrew word, is interpreted by the Greek word, *Christ*; and both signify *anointed*, and well agree with the person to whom they belong, to which there is an allusion in *Cant.* i. 3. *Thy name is as ointment poured forth.* He is so called, because he was anointed from everlasting, to be Prophet, Priest, and King; see *Psalms* ii. 6. and lxxxix. 20. *Prov.* viii. 22, 23. and he was *anointed*, as man, *with the oil of gladness*, with the graces of the Spirit, without measure, *Psalms* xlv. 7. *Acts* x. 38. And it is from him the saints receive the anointing, or grace in measure; and are from him called *Christians*, and are really anointed ones; see *1 John* ii. 27. *Acts* xi. 25. *2 Cor.* i. 21. hence it is a name precious to the saints, and savoury to them. These words were

(f) Misna Pesachim, c. 5. § 1.

(g) Prefat. ad Methurgeman, & in voce משיח

(h) Lexicon Talmud. p. 1268.

were delivered by Andrew, in a very exulting strain, expressing great joy; as indeed what can be greater joy to a sensible soul, than to find Christ? Which, in a spiritual sense, is to have a clear sight of him by faith, to go unto him, and lay hold on him, as the only Saviour and Redeemer: who is to be found in the scriptures of truth, which testify of him; in the promises of grace, which are full of him; and in the Gospel, of which he is the sum and substance; and in the ordinances of it, where he shews himself: for he is not to be found by the light of nature, or by carnal reason, nor by the law of Moses; but by means of the Gospel, and the Spirit of God attending that, as a Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of him: and happy are those souls that find Christ under his direction; for they find life, spiritual and eternal, in him; a justifying righteousness; free and full pardon of their sins; spiritual food for their souls; and peace, comfort, joy, and rest, and eternal glory. Wherefore this must needs be matter of joy unto them, since such a finding is a rich one, a pearl of great price, riches durable and unsearchable; and which a man that has found, would not part with for all the world; but parts with all he has for it; and is what can never be lost again; and particularly to two sorts of persons, finding Christ must give a peculiar pleasure, and an inexpressible joy; to such as are under a sense of sin and damnation, and to such who have been under desertion. The phrase of *finding* a person, twice used in this text, and hereafter in some following verses, is frequent in Talmudic and Rabbinic writings; as “He went אשכחתי לרב” and found him with Rab (i).”

42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.

That is, Andrew brought his brother Simon to Jesus; he persuaded him to go along with him, and shewed him where he was: which discovered great zeal for Christ, being desirous of gaining souls unto him; and great affection to his brother, being heartily concerned that he might know Christ, as well as himself: nor did he choose that he should take up with the bare account that he gave of him, but would have him go to him in person, that he might be personally acquainted with him, and instructed by him: and this also shews the readiness and willingness of Simon, to see and hear Christ himself, and not sit down contented with the bare relation his brother gave: no doubt he found his heart stirred up within him, and the desires of his soul going after Christ; and therefore he at once rose up and went with Andrew to him; and thus

one person may be the means of bringing another to Christ: and it may be observed, that Peter was not the first of the Apostles that was called by Christ, or first knew him; Andrew was before him, and the means of bringing him into an acquaintance with Christ: had it been the reverse, the Papists would have improved it in favour of Peter, as the prince of the Apostles: this clause is omitted in the Perfic version.

And when Jesus beheld him] As he was coming, or come to him: he had beheld him before in the glass of his Father's purposes and decrees; he had viewed him in his blood, and said unto him, *live*; and he now looked upon him with a look of love, of complacency and delight:

He said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona] Thy name is Simon, and thy father's name is Jona: he knew both their names, though he might have never seen their faces, nor heard of them before: this he said to give Simon a testimony of his omniscience; and which, no doubt, must strike him at once. Simon, or Simeon, was a common name among the Jews, being the name of one of the twelve patriarchs; see the note on *Matt. x. 2.* and so likewise was Jona, being the name of a prophet of theirs; see the note on *Matt. xvi. 17.* and inasmuch as the prophet Jonah was of Geth Hepar in Zebulon, which was in Galilee; see the note on *John vii. 52.* this might be a common name among the Galileans; so that there seems no reason why it should be thought to be the same with *John*, as the Ethiopic version reads it; and by way of interrogation: “Art thou not Simon the son of John?”

Thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone] Or Peter, as it should rather be rendered; and as it is in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions: and as *Cepha*, or *Cephus*, in the Syriac and Chaldee languages signifies a stone, or rock (k), so does Peter in Greek; hence, the Syriac version here gives no interpretation of the word. Christ not only calls Simon by his present name, at first sight of him, but tells him what his future name should be; and which imports, not only that he should be a lively stone in the spiritual building, the church, but should have a considerable hand in that work, and abide firm and steadfast to Christ and his interest, notwithstanding his fall; and continue constant and immoveable until death, as he did. The Jews also, in their writings, call him *Simion Kepha* (l).

43 ¶ The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

(i) T. Bab. Sabbath, fol. 108. 1. Zohar in Lev. fol. 15. 3.

(k) Vid. Targum in *Psalm. xl. 3.* & *Prov. xvii. 5.* T. Bab. Cér. tot. fol. 6. 1. & Gloss. in *ibid.* Tzeror Hammor, fol. 69. 2.

(l) Toldos Jesu, p. 20—23.

The day following, &c.] Not the day after John had pointed out Christ as the Lamb of God to two of his disciples; but the day after Simon had been with him, being brought by Andrew:

Jesus would go forth into Galilee.] From whence he came to Jordan, to John, to be baptized by him; and which being done, and his temptations in the wilderness over, it was his will, resolution, and determination, to return to Galilee, the place of his education and conversation, till this time; and therefore chose to begin his ministry and miracles there, both to give honour to it, and to fulfil a prophecy in *Isaiah ix. 1, 2.* and besides this, he had doubtless another end in going thither, which was, to call some other disciples that dwelt there:

And findeth Philip.] As he was going to Galilee, or rather, when in it; not by hap or chance; but knowing where he was, as the shepherd and bishop of souls, looked him up and found him out, and called him by his grace, to be a disciple of his; see the note on *Matt. x. 3.*

And saith unto him, Follow me.] Leave thy friends, thy calling, and business, and become a disciple of mine: and such power went along with these words, that he at once left all, and followed Christ; as the other disciples, Peter, and Andrew, James, and John, and Matthew did, as is recorded of them, though not of this; but the following history makes it appear he did.

44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

Philip was of Bethsaida, &c.] A town on the lake of Genesareth, afterwards made a city by Philip the tetrarch, and called *Julias*, after the name of Cæsar's daughter (*m*): it was a fishing town, and had its name from thence; and the disciples that were of it were of this business:

The city of Andrew and Peter.] Or Simon, as read the Syriac and Persian versions: three apostles were called out of this place, as mean and wicked as it was; see *Matt. xi. 21.* which was no small honour to it. It is a saying of the Jews (*n*), that "A man's place (his native place) does not honour him, but a man honours his place." This was the case here.

45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

Philip findeth Nathanael, &c.] Who was of Cana of Galilee, *John xxi. 2.* and where, it is very likely, Philip found him; since we quickly read of Jesus and his disciples being there. This man

is thought by some to be the same with *Bartholomew*; and so he is called *Bartholomew*, in a Syriac dictionary (*o*); and the rather, since he and Philip are always mentioned together in the account of the apostles, *Matt. x. 3. Mark iii. 18. Luke vi. 14.* And certain it is, from the above-mentioned place, that Nathanael was among the apostles after our Lord's resurrection; and it is highly probable was one of them: his name might be *Nathanael bar Tholmai*, the son Tholmai, Ptolomy, or Ptolomew. It is the same name with *Nethaneel*, and which is read *Nathanael*, as here, in *1 Esdras ix. 22.* and by the Septuagint on *1 Chron. ii. 14.* and chapter *xv. 24.* and *xxiv. 6.* and *xxvi. 4.* *2 Chron. xxxv. 9.* *Exra x. 22.* *Neb. xii. 36.* and signifies, *one given of God*; and is the same with *Theodore* in Greek, and *Adeodatus* in Latin. A doctor of this name, R. Nathaniel, is mentioned in the Jewish writings (*p*):

And saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write.] He does not say, that he, and Andrew, and Simon, had found the Messiah; though he designs him by this circumlocution: Nathanael being, as is generally thought, a person well versed in the law and the prophets, and so would at once know who Philip meant: for Moses, in the law, or *Pentateuch*, in the five books written by him, frequently speaks of the Messiah, as *the seed of the woman, that should break the serpent's head*; as *the seed of Abraham, in whom all nations should be blessed*; and as *the Shiloh, to whom the gathering of the people should be*; and as *the great prophet, like to himself, God would raise up among the children of Israel, to whom they were to hearken*: and as for the prophets, they wrote of his birth of a virgin; of the place of his birth, Bethlehem; of his sufferings, and the glory that should follow; of his resurrection from the dead, his ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God; and of many things relating to his person, and office, and work. And Philip having given this general account of him, proceeds to name him particularly; and affirms him to be

Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.] That his name was *Jesus*, which signifies a Saviour; and answers to the promises, and prophecies, and character of him in the Old Testament; that he was of *Nazareth*, a place not above three hours walk from Cana, as Adrichomius says, where Philip and Nathanael were: Nazareth was the place where Christ had lived almost all his days hitherto, and therefore is said to be of it; though Bethlehem was the place of his birth, which Philip might not as yet know; as Capernaum afterwards was

(o) Bar Bahlul apud Castell, Lexic. Polyglott. col. 2437.

(p) Pirke Eliezer, c. 48.

(m) Joseph. Antiq. l. 18, c. 3. (n) T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 21, 2.

was his city, or the more usual place of his residence: and that he was *the son of Joseph*; this Philip says, according to the common opinion of people; for he was supposed to be *the son of Joseph*, he having married his mother Mary.

46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

Nathanael taking notice of, and laying hold on what Philip said, that he was of Nazareth, which at once stumbled, and prejudiced him against Jesus being the Messiah; knowing very well that Bethlehem was to be the place of his birth; said,

Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? The whole country of Galilee was had in contempt with the Jews; but Nazareth was so mean a place, that it seems it was even despised by its neighbours, the Galileans themselves; for Nathanael was a Galilean, that said these words. It was so miserable a place, that he could hardly think that any sort of good thing, even any worldly good thing, could come from thence; and it was so wicked, as appears from their murderous designs upon our Lord, that he thought no good man could arise from thence; and still less, any prophet, any person of great note; and still least of all, that that good thing, or person, *the Messiah*, should spring from it: so that his objection and prejudice proceeded not only upon the oracle in *Micah* v. 2. which points out Bethlehem as the birth-place of the Messiah; but also upon the wickedness, and meanness, and obscurity of Nazareth.

Philip saith unto him, Come and see] Who though he might not be master of this point, and knew not how to solve this difficulty, and remove this prejudice from Nathanael's mind, he yet persuades him to go with him to Jesus; who, he doubted not, would give him full satisfaction in this, and all other points; and then it would most clearly appear to him, as it had done to Philip, that he was the true Messiah. The phrase, *הוּא הוּא* "come, see;" is often used in the book of *Zohar* (q): so it is, and likewise, *בוא וראה* "come and see," in the Talmudic writings (r).

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

Jesus saw Nathanael, &c.] For notwithstanding his prejudices, he was a man of so much uprightness and honesty, that he thought Philip's re-

quest was very reasonable; and that it was but right and fair, that he should see and hear, and judge for himself, whether the person Philip spoke of was the Messiah, or no; and therefore he came along with him; and as he was coming, Jesus saw him, who knew all that had passed between him and Philip;

And saith of him] To those that were standing by him, and in the hearing of Nathanael,

Behold an Israelite indeed!] A son of Israel, as the Syriac and Perfic versions read; a true son of Jacob; an honest, plain-hearted man, like him; one that was an Israelite at heart; inwardly so; not one *after the flesh* only, but *after the Spirit*; see *Rom.* ii. 28, 29. *1 Cor.* x. 18. and which was a rare thing at that time; and therefore a note of admiration is prefixed to it; for *all were not Israel*, that were of Israel; and indeed but a very few then; and so, *בן ישראל* "a son of Israel," and, *ישׂרָאֵל גָּמור* "a perfect Israelite," are (s) said of such who have a due regard to the articles of the Jewish faith, though not even of the seed of Israel; it is added,

In whom there is no guile] Not that he was without sin; nor is this said of him; nor was he in such sense without guile, as Christ himself was; but guile was not a governing principle in him: the course of his life and conversation was with great integrity and uprightness, and without any prevailing hypocrisy and deceit, either to God or men. This Christ said, to shew how much such a character is approved by him; and that he knew the secrets of mens hearts, and the inward frames of their minds.

48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.

Nathanael saith, &c.] This he said as one surprised that he, who was a stranger to him, should hit upon his general character, and describe the internal state and frame of his soul: this was more surprising to him, than if he had called him by his name *Nathanael*, as he did Simon; or had said what was the place of his abode, *Cana of Galilee*; since this knowledge ordinarily was only to be had from a long and familiar acquaintance and conversation: by Nathanael's reply, it looks as if he had no doubt or fear about the character Christ gave him; but rather, that he believed it, as every good man must be conscious to himself of his own integrity; only it was amazing to him, how he should know it:

Jesus

(q) In *Gen.* fol. 13. 1. & 14. 3. & 16. 1, 2. & in *Exod.* fol. 83. 4. & passim. (r) *T. Bab. Taanith*, fol. 8. 1. & 23. 2. & 24. 1. *Kiddushin*, fol. 20. 1. & 33. 1. & *Sota*, fol. 5. 1, 2. & passim.

(s) *Addareth Eliabu apud Trigland. de Sect. K&aronum*, c. 10. p. 175, 176.

Jesus answered, and said unto him] In order to satisfy him, how he could know this inward temper of his mind, and to give him some undeniable proofs of his omniscience, which he himself must acknowledge, being such as none but an all-seeing eye could discover,

Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee] In which words Christ gives two instances of his omniscience; the one is, that he knew Philip had called him; he was privy to all that had passed between them, though they were alone, and the conversation was had in the most private manner. Christ knew what an account Philip had given of him, and what objection Nathanael had made; and what an invitation Philip had given him to go along with him to Christ, and judge for himself; which is here meant by calling him, and with which he complied: and the other is, that he *saw him under the fig-tree* before that: he was sitting under it, as men in those countries used to do; see *Micah* iv. 4. where he might be reading the scriptures, and meditating upon them; and if, as some observe, he was reading, and thinking upon Jacob's dream, concerning the ladder which reached from earth to heaven, and on which *he saw the angels of God ascending and descending*, the words of Christ in *ψ. 51.* must strike him with fresh surprise, and give him another convincing proof of his omniscience: or he might be praying here in secret, and so acted a different part from the generality of religious men of that nation, who chose to pray in the synagogues, and corners of the streets, that they might be seen; and likewise proved him what Christ had said of him, a true and rare Israelite, without guile and hypocrisy, which were so visible and prevailing among others. It was usual with the doctors to read, and study in the law, under fig-trees, and sometimes, though rarely, to pray there. It is said (r), "R. Jacob, and his companions, were sitting, studying in the law, תחת חור חור" under a certain "fig-tree." And the rule they give about praying, on, or under one, is this (u): "He that prays on the top of an olive-tree, or on the top of a fig-tree, or on any other trees, must come down, and pray below." It is said of Nathanael, in the Syriac dictionary (x); that his mother hid him under a fig-tree, when the infants were slain, that is, at Bethlehem; which, if it could be depended upon, must be to Nathanael a surprising, and undeniable proof of the Deity of Christ, and of his being the true Messiah; since, at that time, he was an infant of days himself, and was the person Herod was seeking to destroy, as the Messiah, and king of the Jews.

(r) T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 5. 3. Vid. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 26. 4.
(u) Ibid. col. 1. & T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 26. 1.
(x) Bar Bahluli apud Castell. Lexic. Polyglott. col. 2437.

49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

Nathanael answered, &c.] Being fully convinced of his omniscience by these instances:

Rabbi] That is, Master, as it is interpreted in *ψ. 38.* and is not here, because it is there:

Thou art the Son of God] Not by creation, for this would be to say no more of him, than may be said of every man; nor by adoption, for in that sense Nathanael himself was a son of God, and many others; nor on account of his wonderful incarnation, which, it is very likely, at this time Nathanael knew nothing of; nor by reason of his resurrection from the dead, which, as yet, was not; and still less might be known by his person: nor because of his office, as mediator, for this is expressed in the next clause; but by nature, as being of the same essence, and possessed of the same perfections God is; and of which he was convinced by the instances he gave of his omniscience; for it was from hence, and no other consideration, that he concludes him to be *the Son of God*: wherefore this phrase must be understood of him, not as mediator, but as a divine person; as the natural, essential, and eternal Son of God; and who is truly and properly God: he adds,

Thou art the King of Israel] Having, in view, no doubt, the passage in *Psalms* ii. 6, 7. where the characters of Son of God and King of Zion, meet in the same person: not *King of Israel*, in a literal sense; though he was the Son of David, and a descendent of his in a right line, and was of the royal line, and had a legal right to the throne of Israel; and Nathanael might have a view to this, being tinctured with the common national prejudice, that the Messiah would be a temporal prince: but his kingdom is not of this world; nor with observation; but is spiritual; and he is a King over Israel in a spiritual sense, even of saints, whether Jews or Gentiles; whom he conquers by his power, and rules in their hearts by his Spirit and grace; and protects, and defends them from all their enemies.

50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

Jesus answered, &c.] Not as reproving him for his faith, as if he was too credulous, and too easily gave into the belief of Christ, as the Son of God and true Messiah, upon these single expressions of his; but as approving of it, and surprised at it:

Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou?] Some read the words, not by

by way of interrogation, but as an assertion; "thou believest, or hast believed;" as the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Persic versions:

Thou shalt see greater things than these] Meaning, that he should have larger discoveries of his person, and perfections, and should see things done by him, much more surprising than any thing he had seen yet; referring to the miracles of raising the dead, casting out devils, and healing all manner of diseases.

51 And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

And he saith, &c.] Not only Nathanael, but to the rest of the disciples that were then with him; and to shew himself to be the Amen, and faithful witness, as well as more strongly to asseverate what he was about to say, he doubles the expression, *verily, verily*,

Hereafter you shall see heaven open] Either in a literal sense, as it had been at his baptism; or, in a mystical sense, that there should be a clearer manifestation of heavenly truths made by his ministry; and that the way into the holiest of all should be made more manifest; and a more familiar intercourse be opened between God and his people; and also between angels and saints:

And the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man] Or "to the Son of man;" as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it; meaning, himself in human nature; the second Adam, and seed of the woman; and is expressive both of the truth, and infirmity of that nature. Reference may here be had to the ladder Jacob dreamed of, in *Genesis* xxviii. 12. which was a representation of Christ, in his person, as God-man; who, as God, was in heaven, whilst he, as man, was on earth; and in his office, as mediator between God and man, making peace between them both; and in the ministration of angels to him in person, and to his body the church. And it is observable, that some of the Jewish writers (y) understand the ascent, and descent of the angels, in *Genesis*, as aforesaid, to be not upon the ladder, but upon Jacob; which makes the phrase there still more agreeable to this; and so they render עָלָיו in *Gen.* 13. not *above it*, but *above him*. Or the sense is, that there would be immediately made such clearer discoveries of his person and grace, by his ministry, and such miracles would be wrought by him in confirmation of it, that it would look as if heaven was open, and the angels of God were

continually going to and fro, and bringing fresh messages, and performing miraculous operations; as if the whole host of them were constantly employed in such services: and this the rather seems to be the sense, since the next account we have, is, of the beginning of Christ's miracles to manifest forth his glory in Cana of Galilee, where Nathanael lived; and since the word, rendered *hereafter*, signifies, *from hence-forward*; or, as the Persic version renders it, "from this hour;" though the word is left out in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions.

C H A P. II.

*In this chapter we have an account of Christ's being at a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and of the miracle he there wrought, by turning the water into wine, *John* 1—11. and his appearing at Capernaum, *John* 12. At the passover he goeth up to Jerusalem, and purifieth the temple, *John* 13—16. The Jews ask for his authority; he sheweth his death and resurrection, *John* 17—22. Many at the passover believe in him, *John* 23—25.*

I AND the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:

Either the third day from the second testimony bore by John the Baptist concerning Christ, and from the call of Simon Peter, which seem to be of the same date; see chapter i. 35, 36, 42, 43. or from Christ's coming into Galilee; or from the conversation he had with Nathanael; from either of which the date is taken, it matters not; the first is as agreeable and plain as any. There is much dispute, and many rules with the Jews about the times, and days of marriage: "A virgin, they say (a), marries on the fourth day (of the week,) and a widow on the fifth, because the sanhedrim sit in the cities twice in the week, on the second, and on the fifth days; so that if there is any dispute about virginity, he, (the husband) may come betimes to the sanhedrim." This was a law that obtained since the times of Ezra; for it is said (b), "Before the order of Ezra, a woman might be married on any day," but in after-times, feast-days, and sabbath-days were particularly excepted. One of their canons is (c), "They do not marry women on a feast-day, neither virgins, nor widows." The reason of it was, that they might not mix one joy with another; and lest a man should leave the joy of

(y) Bereshit Rabba, §. 68, fol. 61. 2. & §. 69, fol. 61. 3, 4.

(a) Misna Cetubot, c. 1. §. 1.

(b) T. Bab. Cetubot, fol.

3. 1.

(c) Misna Moed Katan, c. 1. §. 7. & T. Bab. Moed Katan, fol. 8. 2. & 18. 2.

of the feast, for the joy of his wife. The account Maimonides (*d*) gives of these several things is this; "It is lawful to espouse on any common day, even on the ninth of Ab, whether in the day, or in the night; but they do not marry wives neither on the evening of the sabbath, nor nor on the first of the week," &c. But elsewhere it is said (*e*), that "Now they are used to marry on the sixth day of the week." Yea (*f*), that "It is lawful to marry, and to make the feast on the sabbath-day." But whether this marriage was of a virgin, or a widow, cannot be known; nor with certainty can it be said on what day of the week it was: if that day was a sabbath-day on which the disciples abode with Christ, as Dr Lightfoot conjectures, then it must be on the first day that Christ went into Galilee, and found Philip, and conversed with Nathanael; and if this third-day is reckoned from John's second testimony, it must be on a Tuesday, the third day of the week; but if from Christ's going into Galilee, then it must be on a Wednesday, the fourth day of the week, the day fixed by the Jewish canon for the marriage of a virgin. This marriage was

In Cana of Galilee] The Syriac and Perfic versions read, "in Kotne, a city of Galilee;" and which, in the Jewish map, is called, קטנא בגליל "Katna in Galilee;" and is placed in the tribe of Zebulon, which was in Galilee, and not far from Nazareth; and bids fair to be the same place with this; though it is more generally thought (*g*), that Cana in the tribe of Asher, mentioned in *Joshua* xix. 28. which was also in Galilee, is here meant; and is so called to distinguish it from another *Kanah*, in the tribe of Ephraim, *Joshua* xvi. 8. and chapter xvii. 9. Josephus (*h*) speaks of a town or village of Galilee, called *Cana*, which was a day's march from it to Tiberias, and seems to be the same place: and another Jewish writer (*i*) says, "To me it appears, that *Cepher Chanania*, is *Cepher Cana*; or the village of *Cana*, as is clear in *Misna Sheviith*, c. 9. §. 1. for there is the beginning of lower Galilee;" which also accords with this. Now in the case of marriage, there was some difference between Judea and Galilee, and certain rules were laid down relating thereunto: and it is said (*k*), "There are three countries, for the celebration of marriages; Judea, the country beyond Jordan, and Galilee;" that is, that were obliged to marry among themselves; so that if any one married a wife out of any of these countries, she was not obliged to go along with him from one

country to another (*l*): hence it follows, "They do not bring them out from city to city, (that is, oblige them to go with them from city to city) nor from town to town; but in the same country they bring them out from city to city, and from town to town." And it is elsewhere observed (*m*), that "In Judea, at first, they joined the bridegroom and bride together an hour before they went into the bride-chamber, that so his heart might be lifted up in her; but in Galilee they did not do so: in Judea, at first, they appointed for them two companions, one for him, and another for her, that they might minister to, or wait on the bridegroom and bride, when they went into the bride-chamber; but in Galilee they did not do so: in Judea, at first, the companions slept in the house where the bridegroom and bride slept; but in Galilee they did not do so." Next we have an account of the persons that were present at this marriage:

And the mother of Jesus was there] Who seems to have been a principal person at this wedding, and was very officious; when wine was wanted, she signified it to her Son, and ordered the servants to do whatever he bid them: and since she, and Jesus, and his brethren, were all here, it looks as if it was a relation of hers that was now married: and since these brethren were the kinsmen of Christ, Simon, Judas, and Joses, the sons of Cleophas, or Alpheus, whose wife was sister to the mother of our Lord; and since one of them, to distinguish him from Simon Peter, is called *Simon the Canaanite*, or an inhabitant of Cana, as some have thought; hence it is conjectured by Dr Lightfoot, that Alpheus had an house in Cana, and that his family dwelt there, and that it was for one of his family that this marriage-feast was made; see *Matth.* 2, 3, 5, 12. and chapter xix. 25. *Matt.* xiii. 55. and x. 4. Joseph, the husband of Mary, perhaps, was now dead, since no mention is made of him here, nor any where else, as alive, after Christ had entered on his public ministry.

2 And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

Jesus was called, &c.] Or invited, as being a relation, according to the flesh:

And his disciples, to the marriage] Who were bidden on his account; and they seem to be these, Andrew, and the other disciple that followed Jesus, and Simon Peter, and Philip, and Nathanael, who was of this place: and accordingly they all went to it. Christ, and his five disciples, make six of the ten, which were always necessary to be present

(*d*) Hilchot Ishot, c. 10. §. 14, 15.

Cetubot, art. 6.

(*f*) Ibid. art. 6.

(*e*) P. Ske Toseph.

(*g*) Jerom

de Locis Hebraicis, fol. 90. B.

(*h*) In vita sua.

(*i*) Juchasin, fol. 57. 2.

(*k*) Misna Cetubot, c. 13. §. 10.

T. Hieros. Cetubot, fol. 36. 2.

(*l*) Bartenora in ibid.

(*m*) T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 12. 1.

present at the benediction of bridegrooms: for so runs the canon (*n*); "They do not bless the blessing of bridegrooms, but with ten principal and free men; and the bridegroom may be one of the number." To attend a wedding, was reckoned, with the Jews, an act of beneficence and kindness (*o*). Our Lord, being at this wedding, was acting like himself, and in his general character of being free, affable, and courteous; who accepted of every invitation, and refused not to be at any entertainment, made by who it would, or on whatever occasion: and particularly in this instance it shews his humility in not disdaining his poor relations, but giving them his company at such a time; as also it was bearing a testimony to the institution of marriage, as honourable; and teaches us to rejoice with them that rejoice: and as this was at the first of Christ's ministry and miracles, it is likely it might give the occasion of that calumny cast on him in *Matthew xi. 19*. The disciples of Christ followed the example of their master. According to the Jewish canons (*p*), a disciple of a wife man might not partake of any feast, but what was according to the commandment, as the feast of espousals, and of marriage; and such a feast was this, which Christ and his disciples were at; and so was not to be condemned for it, according to their own maxims.

3 And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.

Or "wine was wanting;" not through the intemperance of the guests, rather through the poverty of the family, who were not able to provide very largely; and it may be by reason of a larger number of guests than were expected; however, so it was ordered by divine providence, that there might be an opportunity for Christ to manifest forth his glory:

The mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine] Being concerned for the family, lest they should be put to shame and disgrace, and the entertainment should not proceed with becoming credit and honour; and knowing the power of Christ to help in this time of necessity, she modestly moves it to him, perhaps by a whisper, sitting next him; or, it may be, might call him out, and just drop the hint; being well persuaded of his power, as she might; not from any miracles wrought by him in her family for the support of it, when in distress; for as Christ wrought no miracle, in the time of his public ministry, for the support of himself or his disciples, but for others; it is not likely he should do it for his family in private life; but from the

wonderful things told her by the angel that brought the news of her conception, and by the shepherds, and by Simeon and Anna, which she had laid up in her heart; and from his being the Messiah, who, according to the general belief of the nation, was to work miracles; and particularly from the last words of the preceding chapter; see the note there: for she might be present at the delivery of them; and therefore might hope that as this was the first opportunity that offered after, that he would display his power in supplying the family with wine in this time of exigence.

4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.

Calling her *woman*, as it was no ways contrary to her being a virgin, *Gal. iv. 4*. so it was no mark of disrespect; it being an usual way of speaking with the Jews, when they shewed the greatest respect to the person spoken to; and was used by our Lord when he addressed his mother with the greatest tenderness, and strongest affection, *John xix. 26*. The Jews frequently object this passage to us Christians: one of their writers forms his objection in this manner (*q*); "They (the Christians) say, 'The mother of Jesus is never called a woman' in their law; but here her Son himself calls her 'a woman.' Another puts it thus (*r*): 'It is their (the Christians) belief, That Mary, even after she brought forth Jesus, was a virgin; but if she was, as they say, why does not her Son call her by the name of virgin? But he calls her 'a woman, which signifies one known by man,' as appears from chapter *iv. 2.* and *viii. 10.*" To which may be replied, That the mother of Jesus is never called a *woman* in the New Testament, is not said by us Christians: it is certain she is so called, both here, and elsewhere; but then this, is no contradiction to her being a virgin; one, and the same person, may be a virgin, and a woman: the damsel, Abraham's servant was sent to take for a wife for his son Isaac, is called a *woman*, though a virgin that had never known any man, *Gen. xxiv. 5, 8, 14, 16, 43, 44*. Besides, we do not think ourselves obliged to maintain the perpetual virginity of Mary, the mother of our Lord; it is enough that she was a virgin when she conceived, and when she brought forth her first-born; and as the Jews endeavour to take an advantage of this against the character of Mary, the Papists are very solicitous about the manner in which these words are said, lest they should be thought to contain a reproof, which they cannot bear she should be judged worthy of; or suggest any thing to her dishonour;

(n) Maimon. *Hilch. Ishot*, c. 10. §. 5. Pirke Eliezer, c. 19. *Shirhashirim* Rabbi, fol. 9. 3.

(o) Maimon. in *Mishn. Peah*, c. 7. §. 1. (p) T. Bab. *Pe. sachim*, fol. 49. 1. & Maimon. *Hilchot Deyot*, c. 5. §. 2.

(q) Vet. Nizzachon, p. 222.

(r) R. Isaac Chizzule Embury, par. 2. c. 42, p. 433.

dishonour, whom they magnify as equal to her Son: but certain it is, that the following words,

What have I to do with thee?] Shew resentment and reproof. Some render the words, "What is it to thee and me?" and give this as the sense, What concern is this of ours? What business have we with it? Let them look to it who are the principals in the feast, and have the management of it. The Jew (*r*) objects to this sense of the words, but gives a very weak reason for it: "But I say, says he, Who should be concerned but the master of the feast? and he was the master of the feast." Whereas it is a clear case that he was one of the guests, one that was invited, *ŷ. 2.* and that there was a governor or ruler of the feast, who might be more properly called the master of it than Jesus, *ŷ. 8, 10.* However, since Christ afterwards did concern himself in it, it looks as if this was not his meaning. Others render it to the sense we do, "What have I to do with thee?" as the Ethiopic version; or "What business hast thou with me?" as the Persic version; and is the same with, *מרי לי ולך* "what have I to do with thee?" used in *1 Kings xvii. 18.* and *2 Kings iii. 13.* where the Septuagint use the same phrase as here; and such a way of speaking is common with Jewish writers (*s*): hereby signifying, that though, as man, and a son of hers, he had been subject to her, in which he had set an example of obedience to parents; yet as God, he had a Father in heaven, whose business he came to do; and in that, and in his office, as mediator, she had nothing to do with him; nor was he to be directed by her in that work; or to be told, or the least hint given when a miracle should be wrought by him in confirmation of his mission and doctrine. Moreover, he adds,

Mine hour is not yet come] Meaning, not the hour of his sufferings and death, in which sense he sometimes uses this phrase; as if the hint was, that it was not proper for him to work miracles as yet, lest it should provoke his enemies to seek his life before his time; but rather, the time of his public ministry and miracles, which were to go together, and the one to be a proof of the other; tho' it seems to have a particular regard to the following miracle, the time of doing that was not yet come; the proper juncture, when, all fit circumstances meeting together, it would be both the more useful, and the more illustrious: or his meaning is, that his time of doing miracles in public was not yet; and therefore, though he was willing to do this miracle, yet he chose to do it in the most private manner; so that only a few, and not the principal persons at the feast, should know it: wherefore the reproof was not so much on the

account of the motion itself, as the unseasonableness of it; and so his mother took it.

5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

She took the reproof in good part, and by the words he said, and the manner in which he spake them, or by the looks he gave, and the gestures he might use, she hoped, and even believed, that the thing she moved for would be done; and therefore went immediately to the servants, and gave them the following instructions:

Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it] Punctually observe and obey his orders in every circumstance.

6 And there were set there six water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

Of stone, &c.] To distinguish them from other vessels made of different matter: for the Jews had "vessels made of dust, and the dung of beasts; *כלי אבנים* "vessels of stone;" vessels of earth; "vessels made of shells; vessels of nitre; vessels made of the bones and skins of fishes (*u*). And as these vessels were very likely for washing of hands, such were used for that purpose: their rule is (*w*), "they may put water for the hands in all sorts of vessels; in vessels of dung, in stone vessels, and in vessels of earth." At a wedding were set vessels of various sizes to wash hands and feet in; there was one vessel called *מיכלה* which the gloss says, was a large pitcher, or bason, out of which the whole company washed their hands and their feet; and there was another called *מיכלתא* which was a lesser, and a beautiful bason, which was set alone for the more honourable persons, as for the bride, and for any gentlewoman (*x*); and such might be these six stone jars, or pots:

After the manner of the purifying of the Jews] Or "for the purifying of the Jews," as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it; that is, for the washing of them, their hands and feet; and their vessels, pots and cups, according to the traditions of the elders; see *Mark vii. 2-4.*

Containing two or three firkins apiece] The Ethiopic version reads, "some held two measures, and some three:" how large the *metreta*, or measure was, which we render a *firkin*, is not certain; it is most likely it answered to the Hebrew *bath*, which was a common measure of liquids with the Jews, and held four gallons and a half, or more; see the note on *Luke xvi. 6.* so that such of these vessels, that

(r) Vet. Nizzachen, p. 223.

(s) Vid. Kimchi in *Psalm*, ii, 12. *Bechinat Olam*, p. 70.

(u) Misn. Celim, c. 10. §. 1. & Maimon. & Bartenora in *ibid.*

(w) Misn. Yadaim, c. 1. §. 2.

(x) Gloss. in T. Bab. Sabbath, fol. 77. 2.

that held two of these measures, contained nine gallons, and such as held three of them, thirteen gallons and a half; and six of these contained a large quantity of wine, one with another: and which makes the following miracle the greater; and shows the liberality of Christ the more, in providing for the following days of the feast, for a marriage was kept seven days (x); and for the family, some time after it was over.

7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

Jesus saith to the servants that waited at the feast, *Fill the water pots with water*] The Ethiopic version adds, "to their brims," as they did. Christ chose the water-pots, and not the vessel, or vessels or bottles, now empty, out of which they had drank their wine; that it might not be said that there was any left therein, which gave colour and flavour to the water: and he ordered them to be filled with water by the servants, that they might take notice, and be witnesses, that that, and nothing else, was put into them; and up to the brims so that they could not be capable of having any other liquor infused into them:

And they filled them up to the brim] Strictly observing the orders of Christ, and the instructions of his mother.

8 And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.

Draw out now, &c.] As soon as ever the vessels were filled with water, without any more delay, he ordered the servants to draw out of those larger into lesser vessels; he does not say what, water or wine:

And bear unto the governor of the feast] Who either had the ordering and management of the feast, and the command of the whole affair; hence the Ethiopic version calls him, "the master of the waiters, or servants:" or he was the chief guest, as the word seems to import, who sat, or rather lay, on the chief couch at the table; and so a proper person to begin with, and put the cup round: or else he might be doctor or chaplain; for such an one was necessary at a marriage; since there were six or seven benedictions to be pronounced; and particularly a blessing was said over the cup of wine: for if there was any wine, a cup of it was brought and he blessed over it first, and ordered every thing concerning the cup; and this made up seven blessings at such a time (y); and therefore was a very fit person to bear the wine to first:

And they bore it] The servants having drawn out of the stone vessels, by cocks, into smaller ones, carried the liquor, as they were ordered, to the above person.

9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

The Persic version reads, "tasted of the wine;" and adds, what is not in the text, "it was of a very grateful flavour:" but the sense is, he tasted of that which was before water, but now was made wine; not in such sense as the Papists pretend that the bread and wine, in the Lord's supper, are transubstantiated into the body and blood of Christ by the consecration of the priest; after which they appear to have the same properties of bread and wine as before; but this water, that was turned into wine, ceased to be what it was before, and became what it was not: it had no more the properties, the colour, and taste of water, but of wine, of which the whole company were judges:

And knew not whence it was] From whence it came, where it was had, nor any thing of the miracle that was wrought, and therefore was a proper person to have it put into his hands first; since it cannot be thought he should say what he does in the following verse, from any compact with Christ, or in favour of him.

But the servants which drew the water knew] They knew from whence they had it, out of the water-pots; and they knew that they filled them with water; and that that liquor, which the ruler of the feast had in his hands, and commended as most excellent wine, was drawn out of them; and that there was no juggle nor deceit in the case: and, upon tasting of it,

The governor of the feast called the bridegroom] To him out of the place where he sat, and which might not be far from him,

10 And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.

And saith the following words; expressing the common custom used at feasts:

Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine] That is, it is usual with men, when they make entertainments, first to give the guests the best, the most generous, and strongest-bodied wine; as being most suitable for them, and they being then

(x) Maimon: Hilchot Ishot, c. 10. §. 12, 13.

(y) Ibid. §. 3, 4.

better able to bear it, and it being most for the credit of the maker of the feast :

And when men have well drunk] Not to excess, but freely, so as that they are exhilarated, and their spirits cheerful, but their brains not intoxicated; so the word, as answering to the Hebrew word, *כֶּזַי* is used by the Septuagint in *Genesis* xliii. 34. and *Cant.* v. 1.

Then that which is worse] Not bad wine, but *τὸ ἥσσον*, "that which is lesser;" a weaker bodied wine, that is lowered, and of less strength, and not so intoxicating, and which is then fittest for the guests. So Martial (x) advises Sextilianus, after he had drank the tenth cup, not to drink the best wine, but to ask his host for wine of Laetania, which was a weaker and lower sort of wine.

But thou hast kept the good wine until now] Which shews he knew nothing of the miracle wrought. And as the bridegroom here did, in the apprehension of the ruler of the feast, at this his marriage, so does the Lord, the husband of the church, in the marriage-feast of the Gospel; and so he will do at the marriage-supper of the Lamb. The Gospel, which may be compared to wine for its purity, pleasant taste, and generous effects, in reviving drooping spirits, refreshing weary persons, and comforting distressed minds, as also for its antiquity; was published before the coming of Christ, in the times of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and the prophets, but in a lower and weaker way; at sundry times, here a little, and there a little, by piece-meals, as it were; and in divers manners, by promises, prophecies, types, shadows, and sacrifices; and was attended with much darkness and bondage: but under the Gospel-dispensation, which is compared to a marriage-feast, it is more fully dispensed, more clearly published, and more freely ministered. The whole of it is delivered, and with open face beheld; and saints are made free by it: it is set in the strongest and clearest light; the best wine is reserved till now: *God has provided some better thing for us*, *Heb.* xi. 40. And so with respect to the future state of the saints, their best things are kept for them till last. They have many good things now; as the Gospel, Gospel-ordinances, the blessings and promises of grace; the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, the presence of God, and communion with Christ, at least at times; all which are better than wine: but then there is an alloy to these; they are lowered by other things, as the corruptions of the heart, the temptations of Satan, the hidings of God's face, and a variety of afflictions; but they shall have their good and best

things hereafter, and drink new wine in Christ's Father's kingdom, without any thing to lower and weaken it: they will have full joys, and never-fading pleasures, and shall be without sin and sorrow; no more deserted, nor afflicted; and shall be out of the reach of Satan's temptations, and with Christ for evermore. Happy are they that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb!

11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

This miracle of turning water into wine, was the first miracle Christ ever wrought, either in public or private; for, as for what miracles he is said to do in his infancy, there is no reason to give credit to them: and this

Did Jesus in Cana of Galilee] Not that this was the only one he did in that place; he afterwards working another there, namely, the cure of a nobleman's son, *John* iv. 46, 54. but the first miracle he did any where, and it was in this place; and which the Syriac and Persic versions again call "Kotne of Galilee;" see the note on *ψ.* 1.

And manifested forth his glory] The glory of his Deity and divine Sonship, which was hid by his assumption of human nature, but broke forth and shewed itself in his miraculous operations, and particularly in this:

And his disciples believed on him] The above five disciples; see *ψ.* 2. whom he had called, and who were with him at this marriage, and were made acquainted with this miracle: and though they believed in him before, and had declared, and professed him to be the Messiah Moses and the prophets spoke of, and the Son of God, and king of Israel; yet they were, by this miracle, more and more confirmed in the faith of these things: besides, others might be made his disciples at this time, and be hereby brought to believe in him.

12 ¶ After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.

After this, &c.] After he had been at Cana, and at the wedding there; after he had wrought the miracle of turning water into wine; and after he had manifested forth the glory of his Deity thereby, and had confirmed the faith of his disciples, he departed from thence, and went lower into the country of Galilee, to Capernaum, a city near the sea of Tiberias; and which, from henceforward, he made the more usual place of his residence, and whither he frequently resorted, and therefore

(x) A Cypriote tibi fax Laetana petatur

Si plus quam decies, Sextilianus, libis. L. 1. Ep. 25.

therefore it is called his city, *Mat. ix. 1.* This refers not to the same journey recorded in *Matthew iv. 12, 13.* for that was after John was cast into prison, whereas this was before; see *John iii. 24.* the company that went with him, are as follow,

He, and his mother. Who had been with him at Cana, and was a principal guest at the wedding: and she now returning home, he accompanies her, to see her to her own habitation; or to settle her in Capernaum, whilst he went about discharging his public ministry.

And his brethren. Or near kinsmen according to the flesh, the sons of Alphaeus, or Cleophas, and Mary, sister to the mother of our Lord; whose names were James, Joses, Simon, and Judas; three of which afterwards became his apostles:

And his disciples. As many as he had yet called, which were Andrew, and the disciple that followed Jesus with him, and Simon Peter, and Philip, and Nathanael:

And they continued there not many days. Not because of the impenitence, unbelief, and wickedness of the place, but for the reason following.

13 And the Jews passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,

That feast of the passover, which was kept on the fourteenth day of Nisan, in commemoration of the Lord's passing over and by the houses of the Israelites, when he slew the first-born in Egypt: and it is called the Jews passover, because they only were obliged to keep it; nor was it obligatory upon the Gentiles; and besides, was now abolished when John wrote this Gospel, though still retained by the unconverted Jews. And moreover, John was now among the Gentiles, and for whose sake he penned this Gospel; and therefore so distinguishes this feast, which was typical of the Christian passover, or of Christ our passover that is sacrificed for us. This was the first passover after Christ's baptism, which is generally thought to have been about half a year before; though so much time cannot be made out from the scriptural account; for from his baptism, to his return out of the wilderness to John, were forty days; and from thence, to his coming to Cana, four or five days more; and perhaps he might be seven days in Cana; for so long a wedding was usually kept; and his stay at Capernaum was but a few days; all which do not amount to above eight or nine weeks at most: the second passover, after this, is, by some, thought to be the feast mentioned in *John v. 1.* and the third in *John vi. 4.* and the fourth and last, at which he suffered, in *John xviii. 28.* The Evangelist John is the only writer that gives an account of the passovers after Christ entered on

his public ministry, by which is known the duration of it, which is generally thought to be about three years and a half. "Three years and a half, the Jews say (a), the Shekinah sat upon the mount of Olives, expecting that the Israelites would repent, but they did not:" and this seems to be the term of time for disciples to learn of their masters: it is said (b), "One came from Athens to Jerusalem, and he served three years and a half to learn the doctrine of wisdom, and he learned it not."

And Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Not alone, but his disciples with him, as appears from *John xv. 17.* to keep the passover, as he had been wont to do, and as the law required; and he being under the law, as a son of Abraham, and the surety of his people, it became him to fulfil all righteousness, ceremonial as well as moral, and which he strictly observed. He is said to go up to Jerusalem, because that stood on higher ground than the low lands of Galilee, and was the only place where the passover might be kept; see *Deut. xvi. 2.*

14 And found in the temple those that fold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:

And found, &c. Not in the holy place itself, nor in the court of the priests, where the sacrifices were offered, nor in the court of the women, nor in the court of the Israelites, where the people worshipped; but in the court of the Gentiles, or the outward court; even all that space of ground which was between the wall which divided the whole from common ground, and the buildings of the temple, and which was open to the air; for the whole sacred inclosure, or all within the wall went by the name of the temple. Into this all strangers might come; and the passover now being at hand, here were

Those that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves. The oxen, or bullocks, were for the *chagiga*, or feast kept on the second day of the passover; see the note on *John xviii. 28.* and the sheep, or lambs, as the Persian version reads, for the passover-supper; and the doves were for the offerings of the poorer sort of lying-in women: with these they were supplied from the mount of Olives. It is said (c), "There were two cedar-trees on the mount of Olives, and under one of them were four shops of them that sold things for purification; and out of one of them they brought forty bushels of young doves every month, and out of them the Israelites had enough for the nests, or the offerings

(a) Prefat. Echa Rabbati, fol. 40. 4.

(b) Echa Rabbati, fol. 44. 4.

(c) Ibid. fol. 52. 4.

"ings of turtle-doves;" see the note on *Matthew* xxi. 12.

And the changers of money sitting] Who changed foreign money into the current coin of the Jews, strangers coming, at this feast, from several parts of the world; and sometimes there was need of changing shekels into half shekels, which, at certain times, were paid for the ransom of Israelites; see the note on the place above mentioned.

15 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;

That is, *Jesus*, as the *Perfic* version expresses it. This scourge might be made either of thongs, cut out of the hides of beasts slain in sacrifice; or of the cords, with which the owners of the cattle had brought them to this place; or with which they had fastened them in it. And it seems to be made, and used, not so much for force and terror, as to intimate, that these persons, the violators of the holy place, deserved the scourge of divine wrath and punishment; as well as to shew the miraculous power of Christ in driving such a number of men before him, with so small and insignificant a weapon; for the phrase is diminutive. The reason given by *Dr. Lightfoot*, and others, why Christ made use of a whip, or scourge, rather than a staff, is, because it was contrary to a Jewish canon (*d*) to go into the mountain of the house, or temple, with a staff in the hand; and yet the man of the mountain of the house, or the master of it, who used to go about every ward with torches burning before him, if he found a Levite asleep in his ward (*e*) struck him, *לפניו* with his staff, and had power to burn his clothes.

He drove them all out of the temple] That is, he drove out the men, as the *Perfic* version reads; the merchants, the sellers of oxen, sheep, and doves, and the money-changers:

And the sheep, and the oxen] The *Perfic* version adds, doves; but these are after mentioned:

And poured out the changers' money] Off of the tables, or out of the boxes, or dishes, or drawers, or purses, in which it was put:

And overthrew the tables] At which they sat, and on which they told their money.

16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

And said, &c.] For as these were kept in coops,

or cages, they could not be drove as the sheep and oxen, nor could they be let out, and fly, without loss to the owners: and therefore Christ said to them,

Take these things hence] Not only the doves, but the pens, coops, or cages, in which they were, and both together:

Make not my Father's house an house of merchandise] So he calls the temple, which was built as an house for God, and where he took up his residence; where were the symbols of his presence; where his worship was kept, and sacrifices offered to him: and he asserts God, whose house this was, to be his Father, and himself to be his Son, as none of the prophets that went before him did; and in such sense as neither men nor angels are; and which carries in it a reason why he was so much concerned for the honour of God, and so much resented the profanation of his house, because he was his Father. A like action with this done by Christ at another time, is recorded in *Matt.* xxi. 12, 13. This was at the beginning of his ministry, that at the close of it, in which he expressed himself with more warmth and severity than here: here he only charges them with making his Father's house an house of merchandise, but there with making it a den of thieves; since they had not only slighted and despised his first reproof, but had returned to their evil ways, and might grow more wicked and audacious. This instance of Christ, now coming into the temple as a public minister, and which was the first time of his entrance into it; after he had taken this character, was a further accomplishment of *Mal.* iii. 1. for he now went into it as the Lord and proprietor of it; and which this action of his, in driving out the merchants with their cattle, shews; and was a surprising instance of his divine power; and is equal to other miracles of his: that a single person, a stranger, one of no power and authority in the government, unassisted and unarmed, with only a scourge of small cords, should carry such awe and majesty with him, and inject such terror into, and drive such a number of men before him, who were selling things for religious uses, and were supported in it by the priests and sanhedrim of the nation.

17 And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

Written in *Psal.* lxi. 9. which Psalm belongs to the Messiah, as is manifest from the citations out of it in the New Testament, and the application of them to Christ, as in *John* xv. 25. and chap. xix. 28. *Rom.* xv. 3. compared with *Psal.* lxi. 4, 9, 21. Christ is represented in it, as suffering for the sins

(d) *Mish.* Beracot, c. 9. §. 5.

(e) *Mish.* Middot, c. 1. §. 2.

of his people; for he himself was innocent; and was hated without a cause; but having the sins of his people imputed to him, he made satisfaction for them, and so restored what he took not away. His sufferings are spoken of in it as very great; and from it we learn, that they are fitly called, by himself, a baptism, which he desired to be baptized with, *Luke xii. 50.* since the waters are said to come into his soul, and he to be in deep waters, where the floods overflowed him; so that he was as one immersed in them: it is not only prophesied of him in it, that he should be the object of the scorn and contempt of the Jewish nation, and be rejected by them, and treated with the utmost indignity, and loaded with reproaches; but it foretold, that they should give him *gall to eat, and vinegar to drink*, which were literally fulfilled in him: and even the Jews themselves seem to be under some conviction, that the Psalm has respect to him; for Aben Ezra, a noted commentator of theirs, on the last words of the Psalm, has this note; "The sense is, they and their children shall inherit it in the days of David, or in the days of the Messiah." It appears from hence, that the disciples of Christ were acquainted with the sacred writings, and had diligently read them, and searched into them, and had made them their study; and upon this wonderful action of Christ, called to mind, and reflected upon the following passage of scripture, which they judged very proper and pertinent to him: *The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.* This passage, so far as it is cited, agrees exactly, word for word, with the original text in *Pf. lxi. 9.* wherefore it is very strange that Surenhusius (*f*) should remark a difference, and give himself a good deal of trouble to reconcile it: he observes, that in the Hebrew text, it is read, *הוֹרָה הַבַּיִת* "the zeal of the Lord," in the third person; whereas it is there, *הוֹרָה בַּיִת* "the zeal of thine house," as here, in the second person: indeed, the word *for*, is left out, as he remarks, there being no need of it in the citation; the Evangelist only historically relating the accommodation of it to Christ, by the disciples; whereas, in the original text, the words contain a reason of the reproach and shame which Christ endured, and was put to by the Jews, on account of his zeal for the house, honour, and worship of God; and the latter part of the text is not produced at all, being not for the present purpose, though very applicable to Christ; and is cited, and applied to him by the apostle in *Romans xv. 3.* Such was Christ's regard to his Father's house, and which was typical of the church of God; and such his concern for his honour, ordinances, and worship, that when he saw the merchandise that was carried on in the temple,

his zeal, which was a true and hearty affection for God, and was according to knowledge, was stirred up in him, and to such a degree, that it was like a consuming fire within him, that eat up his spirits; so that he could not forbear giving it vent, and expressing it in the manner he did, by driving those traders out of it. Phinehas and Elias were, in their zeal, as well as other things, types of Christ; and in the spirit and power of the latter he came; and Christ not only expressed a zeal for the house of God, the place of religious worship, but for the church and people of God, whose salvation he most earnestly desired, and most zealously pursued: he shewed his strong and affectionate regard to it, by his suretyship-engagements for them, by his assumption of their nature, by his ardent desire to accomplish it, and by his voluntary and cheerful submission to death on account of it. And such was his zeal for it, that it eat him up, it inflamed his spirit and affections, consumed his time and strength, and, at last, his life: and he also shewed a zeal for the discipline of God's house, by his severe reflections on human traditions; by asserting the spirituality of worship; by commanding a strict regard to divine institutions; and by sharply inveighing against the sins of professors of religion: and he discovered a warm zeal for the truths of the Gospel, by a lively and powerful preaching of them; by his constancy and assiduity in it; by the many fatiguing journeys he took for that purpose; by the dangers he exposed himself to by it; and by the care he took to free the Gospel from prejudice and calumnies: and it becomes us, in imitation of our great Master, to be zealous for his truths and ordinances, and for the discipline of his house, and not to bear with either the erroneous principles, or the bad practices of wicked men.

18 ¶ Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou dost these things?

They did not lay hands on him, or offer any violence to him; they did not, as the inhabitants of Nazareth did, thrust him out, and lead him to a precipice, to cast him down headlong; nor did they now take up stones to stone him, as they afterwards did, when he asserted his Deity: and it is surprising, that they did not rise up and destroy him at once, a single man, unarmed, and without assistance, having so highly provoked them; the restraint upon them must be his almighty power: nor do they deny what he suggested, that they had made his Father's house an house of merchandise; nor do they offer to vindicate their profanation of the temple, or object to the purging of it; only demand a proof of his right to do it; and which demand was made, not by the common people,

(f) Biblos Katalloges, p. 347.

or by the sellers of oxen, sheep, and doves, and the money-changers, who were drove out, and had not spirit to rally; but by the chief priests and elders, the sanhedrim of the nation, who had the care and government of the temple, and under whose authority the above persons acted; and whose gain and worldly interest were promoted hereby, as a like demand was afterwards made by the same persons; see *Matt. xxi. 23*.

What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou dost these things? They argued, that either he did these things of himself, by his own authority, and then they must be deemed rash and unjustifiable; or he did it by the authority of others: they knew it was not by theirs, who were the great council of the nation, from whom he should have had his instructions and orders, if he acted by human authority; and if he pretended to a divine authority, as they supposed he did, then they insisted upon a sign or miracle to be wrought, to prove that God was his Father, as he suggested; and that he was the proprietor and owner of the temple, and had a right to purge it, as he had done; see *1 Cor. i. 22*.

19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

Jesus answered them in a dark and enigmatical way, yet very properly and pertinently; since it was with respect to the temple, and his power over it, and right to purge it, that a sign was required of him:

Destroy this temple] Pointing, as it were, with his finger to his body; for of that he spake, as appears from *Y. 21*, the dissolution of which, by death he means, the separation of his soul from his body, though not of either from his divine person: and it is to be understood, not as a command, or a grant, or as an exhortation and advice to them to kill his body; but rather as a prophecy of what they would do; or as putting the case, that should they, as he knew they would, destroy his body, then, says he, as a sign of having a power to do what I have done,

And in three days I will raise it up] By which he would appear to be the Son of God with power, that had power of laying down his life, and taking it up again; and is the very sign, namely, his resurrection from the dead on the third day, he gives the Jews, when they sought one of him at another time, and upon another occasion.

20 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building; and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

"The Jews said unto him," as read the Syriac, Arabic, Persian, and Ethiopic versions:

Forty and six years was this temple in building] Which cannot be understood of the temple as built by Solomon, for that was but seven years in building, *1 Kings vi. 37, 38*. But rather of the temple as built by Zorobabel, commonly called the second temple, and might be more properly said to be *this temple*; the calculations of this made by learned men, are various and endless to recite. Daniel's seven weeks, or forty-nine days, which are so many years, can have nothing to do with this account; since they regard not the building of the temple, but the city of Jerusalem; though from the second year of Cyrus, in which the temple began to be built, to the thirty-second of Darius exclusive, was just forty-six years; Cyrus reigning three years, Artaxerxes Ahasuerus fourteen years, and Artaxerxes Darius thirty-two; but their account is more likely, which begins at the first of Artaxerxes Longimanus, who reigned forty years, and ends in the sixth year of Darius, his successor, in which year the temple was finished, *Ezra vi. 15*. But to me it seems rather, that Herod's temple, or the temple as re-built, or repaired by Herod, is here meant; and which the Jews call, *temple* "the building of Herod (g);" and say of it, that "That he who has not seen Herod's building, never saw a beautiful building." And this according to Josephus (h), was begun in the eighteenth year of his reign, in the thirty-fifth of which Christ was born, who was now thirty years of age: so that reckoning either the eighteenth year of Herod, or the thirtieth of Christ, the present year exclusively, just forty-six years had run out, since the rebuilding or reparations were first begun; and which were not yet finished; for some years after this, the above writer observes (i), the temple was finished, even in the times of Nero and Agrippa: and agreeable to this, the words may be rendered, *forty-six years has this temple been building*; and which still adds more force to the following reasoning of the Jews:

And wilt thou rear it up in three days?] The thing is impossible and impracticable; it is madness to the last degree to talk at this rate: thus from the length of time which had run out from Herod's first beginning to repair and beautify the temple, till now, and yet not finished, they argue the absurdity of his pretending to raise up such a fabrick, should it be demolished, in three days time; they understanding him, either ignorantly or wilfully, to speak of the material temple, when his sense was otherwise, as appears from the words of the Evangelist, in the next verse. The Jew (k) objects to this

(g) T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 4. 1. 15. c. 14.

(i) Ibid. l. 20. c. 8.

(k) R. Isaac Ch...

Euk. Eimuns, par. 2. c. 43. p. 424.

this account, of the temple being forty-six years in building; he observes, that "According to the sense of the Nazarenes, this was the building of king Herod, that it was in the time of Jesus; and the whole time of his reign was but seven and thirty years, as is manifest from the book of Joseph ben Gorion, cap. 65. Besides that which Herod built, was built in eight years, as is evident from the same author, cap. 55. wherefore the number of forty-six years, in the words of the writer, (the Evangelist) is a palpable error." To which may be replied, That admitting there is an error in this number, it is not the error of the Evangelist, but of the Jews, whose words the Evangelist relates; and supposing this was a mistake of theirs, either ignorantly or wilfully made, to aggravate the absurdity and impossibility of Christ's rebuilding the temple; and that even the Evangelist knew it to be a mistake; yet he acts the most faithful and upright part, in repeating the words of the Jews as they delivered them; and it lies upon the Jew to prove, that these words were not said by them, or that it is not credible that they should: that this was the building of Herod which is here referred to, and that he reigned but thirty-seven years, will be granted; but this is no objection to its being forty-six years in building, since in this account it is not said that it was forty-six years in building by Herod; the sense is only, that such a number of years had passed, since it was first began to be built by him: as for what Joseph ben Gorion says, of its being built by him in the space of eight years, it is not to be depended upon, since he is not the true Josephus, that wrote the history of the Jews, and is to be corrected by the genuine historian; and from what has been before observed, from the time which according to the true Josephus this building was begun, to this present year of Christ, when this discourse was had, were just forty-six years; and admitting, that the main of the building was finished in eight years time, yet additions were continually made to it, so that it was not finished entirely until many years after.

21 But he spake of the temple of his body.

Which body was the antitype of the material temple; and might well be called so, since the bodies of the saints are called temples, 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. and chap. vi. 19. 2 Cor. vi. 16. and the human nature of Christ is called a *tabernacle*, Heb. viii. 2. and he himself in prophecy, is said to be, *מקדש* "for a sanctuary," or temple, *Isaiah* viii. 14. and that because the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily, the train of the divine perfections, filled the temple of his human nature, *Col.* ii. 9. *Isaiah* vi. 1. And because here, as in the temple, God grants his presence, and communes with his

faints, accepts of their prayers and praises, and all their spiritual sacrifices, through him; him, who is the oracle, the true Urim and Thummim, by whom he delivers his whole mind and will to his people.

22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

Which resurrection was three years after this:

His disciples remembered that he had said this unto them] Either to the Jews, or to them, the disciples; though the phrase *to them*, is not in the Vulgate Latin, nor in any of the Oriental versions. The disciples themselves were very dull of understanding the doctrine of Christ's resurrection; and so they continued, notwithstanding he gave them afterwards very full hints of it, until he was actually risen; and then they called to mind these words of his, with others that dropped from him upon the same subject:

And they believed the scripture] That spoke of his resurrection, *Psalms* xvi. 10. and on the third day, *Hosea* vi. 2.

And the word which Jesus had said] Concerning his rising again the third day, at this time, and at others, as in *Matthew* xvi. 21. and chap. xvii. 23. and xx. 19. and they believed his word equally with the scripture, it agreeing to it, and being founded on it.

23 ¶ Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.

He went to Jerusalem in order to keep the passover, that being at hand, and now come; see *John* 7. 13.

In the feast day] Either on the day the Chagigah was eaten, which was sometimes emphatically called *the feast*, as in *Numbers* xxviii. 16, 17. *And in the fourteenth day of the first month, is the passover of the Lord; and in the fifteenth day of this month, is the feast*; the passover-lamb was eaten on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, and the Chagigah was on the fifteenth; in the former only a lamb was eaten, in the other, cattle out of the herds; hence mention is made both of flocks and herds, for the keeping the passover, *Deut.* xvi. 2. Jarchi's note upon the place is, that the herds were for the Chagigah, with which the Talmud (1) agrees; and Jonathan ben Uzziel paraphrases the words thus, "And ye shall slay the passover before

(1) Pésachim, fol. 76. 2.

"the Lord your God, between the evenings, and the sheep and oxen on the morrow, in that very day, for the joy of the feast;" for it was observed with great joy and mirth: and the rather this is here meant, since the Chagigah is not only called *the feast*, but this here is distinguished from the passover, as that is in the passage above cited, *Numbers* xxviii. 16, 17. For the passover here, seems to be the general name for the whole seven days of the festival; and the feast, to be the particular feast of the first day of it, which was the fifteenth; to which may be added, that on this day all the males made their appearance in court (*m*); and so was a very proper time for Christ to work his miracles in, when there were so many spectators: though it may design the whole time of the feast, all the seven days of unleavened bread; during which time Christ was at Jerusalem, and wrought miracles, which had the following effect:

Many believed in his name] That he was some great prophet, or the prophet, or the Messiah; they gave an historical assent unto him as such, at least for that time:

When they saw the miracles which he did] For as miracles, according to the prophecies of the Old Testament, were to be performed by the Messiah, such as giving sight to the blind, causing the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and the lame to walk, *Isaiah* xxxv. 5, 6. so they were expected by the ancient Jews, that they would be wrought by him, when he came; wherefore these Jews, seeing such like wonderful things wrought by Jesus, they concluded he must be the Messiah: though the modern ones, in order to shift off the evidence of Jesus being the Messiah, from his miracles, deny that miracles are the characteristic of the Messiah, or will be performed by him; at least, that there is no necessity of them to prove him to be the person. What miracles these were, which were now wrought by Christ, are not recorded by this, or any other Evangelist; see chap. xx. 30. However, being surprised at the marvellous things he did, and upon the evidence of these extraordinary works, there were many that concluded he must be come from God; among these it seems as if Nicodemus was one; see chap. iii. 2. Great part of these, at least, some of them, were only nominal and temporary believers, who were not to be confided in as true disciples, and hearty followers of Christ; and who continued not long in the same mind and profession, as appears by what follows.

24 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men,

The sense according to some of the ancients is, that he did not commit the whole of the Gospel to

them; he did not make known to them all his mind and will; this he only did to the twelve apostles, his special disciples and friends; nor was the time come that he would make known, or have made known, the things concerning his person, office, obedience, sufferings, death, and resurrection from the dead: but rather the meaning is, that he did not trust himself with these persons, who believed in him on the foot of his miracles; he did not take them into the number of his associates; he did not admit them to intimacy with him; nor did he freely converse with them, or make any long stay among them; but soon withdrew himself from hence, and went into other parts of Judea, and into Galilee:

Because he knew all men] Good and bad: all openly profane sinners, and all their actions; not only their more public ones, but those that are done in the dark, and which are the most secretly devised, and levelled against the saints; and he so knew them, as to bring them into judgment: and all good men, true believers; he knows their persons, as they are his Father's choice, his gift of them to him, his own purchase, and as called by his grace; and so as to distinguish them at the last day, and give up the full account of every one of them to his Father: he knows the worst of them, the sin that dwells in them, their daily infirmities, their secret personal sins; their family-sins, both of omission and commission; and their church-sins, or which are committed in the house of God; and takes notice of them, so as to resent them, and chastize them for them: he knows the best of them, their graces, their faith, hope, love, patience, humility, self-denial, &c. He knows their good works, and all their weaknesses and their wants: and he knows all nominal professors, on what foot they take up their profession, and what trust they place in it; he can distinguish between grace and mere profession, and discern the secret lusts which such indulge, and the spring and progress of their apostasy: he knew all these men, that upon seeing his miracles, professed at this time to believe in him; he knew the hypocrisy and dissimulation of some of them; and he knew the notions they had of a temporal Messiah, and the temporal views they had in believing in him; and their design to set him up as a temporal prince, as some afterwards would have done: he knew the flashy affections of others, who were like John's hearers, that were pleased for a while; he knew what sort of faith it was they believed in him with, that it would not hold long, nor they continue with him; for he knew not only all persons, but *all things*, "all things," as some copies read here; see *John* xxi. 17.

25 And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.

Testify of this or the other man, that he was a good or a bad man; he needed no proofs to be made, or testimonies bore, or evidence given of mens characters and actions; he was of quick understanding, and could distinguish at once between a wicked man and a good man; and so had the characteristic which the Jews require of the Messiah; for they rejected Bar Cozba from being the Messiah, and slew him, because *he could not smell*, referring to *Isaiah xi. 3.* or discern a bad man from a good man (*n*); but this Jesus could do, without any external evidence:

For he knew what was in man] Which none but the spirit of a man can know; his inward thoughts, the secrets of the heart; thus Christ knew the thoughts of the scribes and Pharisees, *Matt. ix. 4.* being a *discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*, *Heb. iv. 12.* This Apollonius Tyanæus, the ape of Christ, ascribed to (*o*) himself; but is what is peculiar to God; and Christ, being God, knows all that is in man; that there is no good in him naturally, nothing but what comes from his Father, is imparted by himself, or implanted by his Spirit; he knows the wickedness there is in man, that his heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, and full of all manner of iniquities; he knows in what condition all the powers and faculties of the souls of men are; what their affections are set upon, on earthly or heavenly things; whether there is any light in their understandings or no; whether their wills are subdued and resigned to the will of God, or no; whether their minds and consciences are defiled, or their hearts are sprinkled from an evil conscience; in short, whether the internal good work of grace is begun upon their souls, or not; and he knows the secret springs of all actions, good and bad; all which prove his true and proper Deity, and shew him to be a suitable Saviour of sinners, and qualify him to be the judge of the whole earth.

C H A P. III.

In this chapter Christ sheweth Nicodemus the necessity of regeneration, v. 1—13. His death, and faith in it, v. 14, 15. The great love of God to the world, in giving his Son to die for it, v. 16, 17. The condemnation of them that do not believe, v. 18—21. Christ's disciples baptize in Judea, and John in Enon, v. 22—24. The Jews dispute with John's disciples about purifying, v. 25. John sheweth the excellency and dignity of Christ above himself, v. 26—36.

(*o*) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 93. 2.

(*e*) Philostrat. Vit. Apollonii, l. 1. c. 13.

TH E R E was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

The Syriac version adds, *there*; that is, at Jerusalem; and who was among those that believed in the name of Christ, upon seeing the miracles he did at the feast of the passover, in that place. This man was not a common and ordinary man, but a man of note and eminence, of dignity and figure; and who was of the sect of the Pharisees, which was the strictest sect for religion and holiness among the Jews; and which, as corrupt as it was, was also the soundest; as having not only a regard to a Messiah, and to all the writings of the Old Testament, but also believed the doctrines of angels and spirits, and the resurrection of the dead, which the Sadducees denied; but yet they were implacable enemies of Christ; and therefore it is the more to be wondered at, that such an one should come to him, and desire a conversation with him:

Named Nicodemus] Frequent mention is made of, נִקְדֵּמון בֶּן גִּרְיוֹן "Nicodemon ben Gorion," the brother of Josephus ben Gorion (*a*), the writer of the wars and antiquities of the Jews; and there are some things which make it probable, that he was the same with this Nicodemus; for the Nicodemon the Jews speak so much of, lived in this age; as appears, not only from his being the brother of Josephus, but also from his being contemporary with R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, who lived in this time, and until the destruction of the temple; since these two are said (*b*) to be together at a feast, made for the circumcision of a child. Moreover, he is represented as very rich, and is said to be one of the three rich men in (*c*) Jerusalem, and who was able to have maintained, נָמְנוּ "a city ten years (*d*):" and they speak of his daughter, as exceeding rich; they say, that she had for her dowry a thousand thousand golden denarii, or pence; and that her bed was strewed with (that is, the furniture of it cost) twelve thousand golden denarii; and that a Tyrian golden denarius was spent upon her every week, for a certain kind of soup (*e*); and the wise men decreed her four hundred golden denarii for a box of spices every day (*f*); and it is elsewhere (*g*) said, five hundred; and this our Nicodemus was very rich, as appears from his liberality at the funeral of our Lord, *John xix. 39.* Moreover, the Nicodemon

(*a*) Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 1. Shalhuat Hake-

bah, fol. 19. 1.

(*b*) Pirke Eliezer, c. 2. & Juchasin,

fol. 23. 2.

(*c*) T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 56. 1.

(*d*) Midrash

Kahlet, fol. 75. 4.

(*e*) Abot R. Nathan, c. 6. fol. 3. 2.

(*f*) T. Bab. Cebubot, fol. 66. 2.

(*g*) Echa Rabbiati,

fol. 49. 2.

of the Jews, is said to be a counsellor (*b*) in Jerusalem; and so was this, as seems evident from *John* vii. 32, 50, 51. and it may be further observed (*i*), that the right name of Nicodemus, was *Boni* (*k*); now *Boni* elsewhere (*l*), is said to be one of the disciples of Jesus, as Nicodemus was secretly, and perhaps at, and after his death openly, as his associate Joseph of Arimathea was; to which may be added, the extreme poverty that his daughter is by them said to be reduced unto; for they report, that R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, saw her gathering barley-corns from under the horses' hoofs in (*m*) Aco; or as it is elsewhere said, out of the dung of the beasts of the Arabians; when she asked alms of him, and he inquired of her, what was become of her father's substance. Now to this low estate, the family of our Nicodemus might be reduced through the persecution of the Christians by the Jews. The name is Greek, as at this time many Greek names were in use among the Jews, and signifies the same as Nicholas; but the Jews give an etymology of it, agreeable to the Hebrew language; and say, that he was so called, because the sun, נקדמו "stone out for his sake:" the occasion and reason of it they tell us, were this (*n*); Nicodemus, upon want of water at one of the feasts, agreed with a certain man for twelve wells of water, to be returned on such a day, or pay twelve talents of silver; the day being come, the man demanded the water, or the money; Nicodemus went and prayed, and a plentiful rain fell, and filled the wells with water; but meeting the man, he insisted on it that the day was past, the sun being set, and therefore required the money; Nicodemus went and prayed again, and the sun shone out; and they add, "That there are three persons for whom the sun נקדמו "was prevented," detained, or hindered in its course, (a) "word nearer his name than the former) Moses, "and Joshua, and Nicodemus ben Gorion;" For the two former they produce scripture, and for the latter tradition: hence it is elsewhere said (*o*), "That as the sun stood still for Joshua, so it stood still for Moses, and for Nicodemus ben Gorion." But to proceed with the account of our Nicodemus, he was

A ruler of the Jews] Not a civil magistrate; for the civil government was now in the hands of the Romans; but an ecclesiastical ruler; he was a member of the Sanhedrim, which consisted of the doctors, or wise men, and priests, Levites, and elders of the people; and so was a dignified person, and, as afterwards called, *a master in Israel*.

(b) *Echa Rabbati*, fol. 46. 3. *Midrash Kohelet*, fol. 75. 1.
(i) *T. Bab. Taanith*, fol. 20. 1. (l) *T. Bab. Sanhedrim*, fol. 23. 1. (j) *Echa Rabbati*, fol. 49. 3. (m) *T. Bab. Cerubot*, fol. 66. 2. (n) *T. Bab. Taanith*, fol. 20. 1.
(o) *T. Bab. Avoda Zara*, fol. 25. 1.

2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

Came by night, through fear of the Jews; of being reproached, or turned out of his place by them; or through shame, that such a doctor as he was, should be known to go to Jesus of Nazareth to be instructed by him; or lest he should offend any of his brethren of the Sanhedrim. Though some things may be said in favour of this conduct of Nicodemus; for since Christ would not trust himself with those that believed in him upon seeing his miracles, chapter ii. 23, 24. among whom Nicodemus seems to be; or would not admit them into his company, or to enter into a free conversation with him; it was necessary, that if he would have any discourse with him, that he should take this method; and if it was the same night, in which he had seen his miracles in the day, as is probable, he took the first opportunity he could, and which shews great readiness and respect; add to which, that it was very common with the Jewish doctors, to meet and converse together, and study the law in the night. "R. Aba rose, בפניו לילה "in the middle of the night," and the rest of the companions, to study in the law (*p*). And it is often (*q*) said of R. Simeon ben Jochai, and Eleazar his son, "that they sat in the night, and laboured in the law;" and it was reckoned very commendable so to do, and highly pleasing to God: it is said (*r*), "Whoever studies in the law in the night, the holy blessed God draws a thread of mercy upon him in the day:" and likewise (*s*), that "Every one that studies in the law in the night, the Shekinah is over against him." But it seems, the Babylonian Jews did not study in the law in the night (*t*); it might seem a needless question to ask, whether Nicodemus came alone, or no; were it not that, according to the Jewish canon (*u*), a scholar might not go out in the night alone, because of suspicion:

And said unto him, Rabbi] A title which now greatly obtained among the Jewish doctors, and of which they were very fond; see the note on *Matt.* xxiii. 7. It comes from a word, which signifies *great* and *large*; and was used by them, to suggest the large compass, and great plenty of knowledge

(p) *Zohar* in *Exod.* fol. 84. 1. (q) *Ibid* fol. 88. 2. in *Lev.* fol. 5. 3, 4. & 10. 1. & passim. (r) *T. Bab. Chagiga*, fol. 12. 2. *Avoda Zara*, fol. 3. 2. *Maimon. Hilch. Talmud Tora*, c. 3. §. 13. (s) *T. Bab. Tamid*, fol. 32. 2.
(t) *T. Bab. Taanith*, fol. 9. 2. (u) *T. Bab. Chulin*, fol. 91. 1. *Piske Tosephos Pesech. art. 12.* & *Maimon. Hilchot Deyot. c. 5. §. 9.*

knowledge they would be thought to have had; and best becomes and suits with our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are: salutations among the Jews, were forbidden in the night (*); "Says R. Jochanan, "it is forbidden a man to salute his neighbour in "the night, lest it should be a demon:" but here was no such danger; nor was this salutation made in the street, and in the dark, which the canon seems to respect:

We know that thou art a teacher come from God] The Jews expected the Messiah as a teacher, which they might learn from many prophecies, as from *Isaiah* ii. 2, 3. and chapter xlviii. 17. and lxi. 1. Upon the first of which, and on that passage in it, *he will teach us of his ways*, a noted commentator (y) of theirs has this remark; "המורה "the teacher," "he is the King Messiah." And the Targum, on *Joel* ii. 23. paraphrases the words thus; "O ye children of Zion, rejoice and be glad in the "Word of the Lord your God, for he will return, "ח מלכך "your teacher to you." And Nicodemus acknowledges Jesus as such; and as one that did not come, or was sent by men, as their doctors were; nor did he come of himself, as false teachers did; but he came from God, and had his mission and commission from him: and this was a known case, a clear point, not only to himself, but to many of the Jews; and even to some of his brethren, the members of the sanhedrim; who, upon hearing of, and seeing the miracles done by Christ, might meet and converse freely together about him, and give their sentiments of him; and might then agree pretty much in this at that time, that he was at least a prophet, or some extraordinary teacher, whom God had sent among them; and Nicodemus coming directly from them, repeats his own sense and theirs, supported by the following reason:

For no man can do these miracles that thou dost, except God be with him] Referring to the miracles he had done at the passover in Jerusalem, very lately; see chapter ii. 23. And which, though they are not particularly mentioned, may be concluded to be such, as the dispossessing of devils, the curing of all manner of diseases by a word or touch, from what he at other times, and elsewhere did. Miracles were expected by the Jews to be wrought by the Messiah, and many believed in Jesus on this account; see chap. vi. 14. and vii. 31. Though the modern Jews deny it to be necessary, that miracles should be done by the Messiah (z); but Nicodemus and other Jews thought other-

wife, and considered the miracles of Christ, as such as could never be done by man, nor without the presence and power of God; and concluded that he was with God, and God with him, and was the true Immanuel, who is *God with us*.

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Jesus answered, &c.] Not to any express question put by Nicodemus; unless it can be thought that a question of this kind might be asked, What is the kingdom of God, so much spoken of in thy ministry? And what is requisite to the seeing and enjoying of it? though not recorded by the Evangelist: But rather to the words of Nicodemus, concluding from his miracles, that he was the Messiah; and that the kingdom of God was now approaching, or the world to come, the Jews so much speak of; and in which all Israel, according to their notion, were to have a part (a); and which notion, our Lord in the following words seems to oppose:

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God] Nicodemus, according to the general sense of the nation, thought that when the Messiah came, and his kingdom was set up, they should all share in it, without any more ado; they being the descendants of Abraham, and having him for their father: but Christ assures him, that he must be *born again*; in distinction from, and opposition to his first birth by nature; in which he was vile, polluted, carnal, and corrupt, being *conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity*; and was a transgressor from the womb, and by nature a child of wrath; and in opposition to his descent from Abraham, or being born of him, and of his seed; for this would be of no avail to him in this case, nor give him any right to the privileges and ordinances of the kingdom of God, or the Gospel-dispensation; see *Matt.* iii. 9. as also to birth by proselytism; for the Jews have a frequent saying (b), that "One that is made a proselyte, "קטן שנולד דמי "is like a child new-born:" which they understand, not in a spiritual, but in a civil sense; such being free from all natural and civil relations, and from all obligations to parents, masters (c), &c. And by this phrase our Lord signifies, that no man, either as a man, or as a son of Abraham, or as a proselyte to the Jewish religion, can have any true knowledge of, or right unto, the enjoyment of the kingdom of God, unless he:

(x) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 44. 1. & Megilla, fol. 3. 1. & Piske Tosephot Megilla, art. 4. & in Yebamot, art. 238.

(y) R. David Kimchi in loc.

(z) Maimonides Hilchot Melachim, c. 11. §. 3.

(a) Misna Sanhedrim, c. 11. §. 1.

(b) T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 22. 1. 48. 2. 62. 1. 97. 2.

(c) Vid. Maimon, Illura Bja, c. 14. §. 11. & Eduth, c. 23. §. 2.

(d) T. Bab. Yebamot,

(e) Vid. Maimon, Illura

he is *born again*; or regenerated, and quickened by the Spirit of God; renewed in the spirit of his mind; has Christ formed in his heart; becomes a partaker of the divine nature; and in all respects a *new creature*; and another in heart, in principle, in practice, and conversation: or unless he be *born from above*, as the word is rendered in *John* 3. 31. that is, by a supernatural power, having the heavenly image instamped on him; and being called with an heavenly calling, even with *the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*: if this is not the case, a man can have no true knowledge of the kingdom of the Messiah, which is not a temporal and carnal one; it is not of this world, nor does it come with observation; nor can he have any right to the ordinances of it, which are of a spiritual nature; and much less can be thought to have any true notions, or to be possessed of the kingdom of grace, which lies in *righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*; or to have either a meetness for, or a right unto the kingdom of glory: though by the following words it seems, that the word is rightly rendered *again*, or a *second time*, as it is by Nonnus.

4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

Understanding him of a natural birth, to be repeated, says,

How can a man be born when he is old?] As it seems, by this, he himself now was:

Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?] The Ethiopic version adds, *again*; and the Arabic version, "and then be born;" this he urges, as absurd, impracticable, and impossible; and which shews him to have been as yet a natural man, who could not receive nor discern spiritual things.

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Jesus, explaining somewhat more clearly what he had before said, answered,

Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit] These are, מֵי וּרוּחַ "two words," which express the same thing; as Kimchi observes in many places in his commentaries, and signify the grace of the Spirit of God. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, "the holy Spirit," and so Nonnus; and who doubtless is intended: by *water*, is not meant material water, or baptismal water; for water-baptism is never expressed by water only, without some additional word, which shews, that

the ordinance of water-baptism is intended: nor has baptism any regenerating influence in it; a person may be baptized, as Simon Magus was, and yet not *born again*; and it is so far from having any such virtue, that a person ought to be *born again*, before he is admitted to that ordinance: and though submission to it is necessary, in order to a person's entrance into a Gospel-church-state; yet it is not necessary to the kingdom of heaven, or to eternal life and salvation: such a mistaken sense of this text, seems to have given the first birth and rise to infant-baptism in the African churches; who taking the words in this bad sense, concluded their children must be baptized, or they could not be saved; whereas by *water* is meant, in a figurative and metaphorical sense, the grace of God, as it is elsewhere; see *Ezekiel* xxxvi. 25. *John* iv. 14. Which is the moving cause of this new birth, and according to which God begets men again to a lively hope, and that by which it is effected; for it is by the grace of God, and not by the power of man's free-will, that any are regenerated, or made new creatures: and if Nicodemus was an officer in the temple, that took care to provide water at the feasts, as Dr Lightfoot hints, and as it should seem Nicodemon ben Gorion was, by the story before related of him; see the note on *John* 1. 1. very pertinently does our Lord make mention of water, it being his own element: regeneration is sometimes ascribed to God the Father, as in *1 Peter* i. 3. *James* i. 18. and sometimes to the Son, *1 John* ii. 29. and here to the Spirit, as in *Titus* iii. 5. who convicts of sin, sanctifies, renews, works faith, and every other grace; begins and carries on the work of grace unto perfection; and unless a man has this work of his wrought on his soul, as he will never understand divine and spiritual things, so he can have no right to Gospel-ordinances, or things appertaining to the kingdom of God; nor can he be thought to have passed from death to life, and to have entered into an open state of grace, and the kingdom of it; or that living and dying so, he shall ever enter into the kingdom of heaven; for unless a man is regenerated, he is not born heir apparent to it; and without internal holiness shall not enter into it, enjoy it, or see God.

6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Man by his natural birth, and as he is born according to the flesh, of his natural parents, is a mere natural man; that is, he is carnal and corrupt, and cannot discern spiritual things; nor can he as such, enter into, and inherit the kingdom of God; see *1 Cor.* ii. 14. and chapter xv. 50. And therefore there is a necessity of his being born again, or of the grace of the Spirit, and of his becoming a spiritual

a spiritual man; and if he was to be, or could be born again of the flesh, or ever so many times enter into his mother's womb, and be born, was it possible, he would still be but a natural and a carnal man, and so unfit for the kingdom of God. By *flesh* here, is not meant the fleshy part of man, the body, as generated of another fleshy substance; for this is no other than what may be said of brutes; and besides, if this was the sense, *spirit* in the next clause, must mean the soul, whereas one soul is not generated from another: but by *flesh* is designed, the nature of man; not merely as weak and frail, but as unclean and corrupt, through sin; and which being propagated by natural generation from sinful men, cannot be otherwise; for *who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one*, Job xiv. 4. And though the soul of man is of a spiritual nature, and remains a spirit, notwithstanding the pollution of sin; yet it being defiled with the flesh, and altogether under the power and influence of the lusts of the flesh, it may well be said to be carnal or fleshy: hence *flesh*, as it stands opposed to *spirit*, signifies the corruption of nature, Gal. v. 17. and such who are in a state of unregeneracy, are said to be *after the flesh*, and *in the flesh*, and even the mind itself, is said to be *carnal*, Rom. viii. 5—8.

And that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.] A man that is regenerated by the Spirit of God, and the efficacy of his grace, is a spiritual man; he can discern and judge all things of a spiritual nature; he is a fit person to be admitted to spiritual ordinances and privileges; and appears to be in the spiritual kingdom of Christ; and has a right to the world of blessed spirits above; and when his body is raised a spiritual body, will be admitted in soul, body, and spirit, into the joy of his Lord. *Spirit*, in the first part of this clause, signifies the holy Spirit of God, the author of regeneration and sanctification; whence that work is called *the sanctification of the Spirit, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost*, 1 Peter i. 2. Titus iii. 5. And *spirit* in the latter part intends the internal work of grace upon the soul, from whence a man is denominated a spiritual man; and as a child bears the same name with its parent; so this is called by the same, as the author and efficient cause of it: and besides, it is of a spiritual nature itself, and exerts itself in spiritual acts and exercises, and directs to, and engages in spiritual things; and has its seat also in the spirit, or soul of man.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

For Nicodemus marvelled, and was quite astonished at this doctrine of the new birth; it was altogether new to him, and unheard of by him;

nor could he understand, nor conceive in what manner it could be:

Ye must be born again.] In four of Beza's copies, it is read *we*; but as Christ was not begotten in a carnal way, or descended not from Adam in the ordinary way of generation, he was not carnal and corrupt, nor in the least tainted with sin; and so stood in no need of regeneration; wherefore such a reading must be rejected. There is a necessity of the regeneration of those, who are the *chosen* of God, and the *redeemed* of the Lamb; and of them only can the words be understood; for as for others, they neither can, nor will, nor must be born again: but the people of God *must*; partly because it is the will of God; it is his purpose and resolution, that they shall be regenerated; he has chosen them; *through sanctification of the Spirit, unto salvation by Christ*: this is the way and method of saving sinners he has fixed upon, namely, not to save them by works of righteousness, but by grace, and according to his abundant mercy, *through the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost*: and partly, because of the case and condition of men, which requires it; for whereas the chosen people of God: are *predestinated to the adoption of children*, and are taken into the family of God, and are heirs to an inheritance; it is necessary they should have a nature, temper, and disposition of mind, suitable to the inheritance they are to enjoy; which they have not in their natural estate, and which is conveyed to them in regeneration: besides, their carnal minds are enmity to God, and it is necessary that they should be friendly to him, which cannot be without regeneration; nor can they, till they are born again, please God, or do those things which are pleasing to him: to which may be added, which Christ has before suggested, and which shews the necessity of it, that without it, *no man can either see, or enter into the kingdom of God*. To take off the surprise of Nicodemus, our Lord instances in a common natural case, and to which this affair of regeneration may be compared, and by it illustrated;

8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

And always will, for ought any mortal can say or do to the contrary: and so the Spirit of God is a free-agent in regeneration; he works how, and where, and when he pleases; he acts freely in the first operation of his grace on the heart, and in all after influences of it; as well as in the donation of his gifts to men, for different purposes; see 1 Cor. xii. 11. and this grace of the Spirit in regeneration, like *the wind*, is powerful and irresistible; it carries.

carries all before it; there is no withstanding it; it throws down Satan's strongholds, demolishes the fortifications of sin: the whole posse of hell, and the corruptions of a man's heart are not a match for it; When the Spirit works, who can lett?

And thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth] As the wind, though its sound is heard, and its force felt, it cannot be seen; nor is it known certainly from whence it comes, and where are the treasures of it; from whence it begins, and where it ends: so is the grace of the Spirit of God in regeneration to a natural man; it is imperceptible, indiscernible, and unaccountable by him, 1 Cor. ii. 14.

So is every one that is born of the Spirit] He is regenerated by *grace*, which is as free and sovereign, as powerful and irresistible, and as secret and imperceptible, as the wind is: and seeing so ordinary a thing as the blowing of the wind, is of such a nature, and so little to be accounted for; regeneration by the Spirit of God, who is comparable to the wind, and whose name so signifies, need not be thought so marvellous and astonishing, though the natural man discerns it not, and cannot account for it. The beauty and propriety of this simile will more appear by observing, that the same Hebrew word, *רוח* is used both for the *wind*, and for the *Holy Spirit* of God; it is used for the *wind*, in *Genesis* iii. 8. and chapter viii. 1. *1 Kings* xix. 11. *Eccles.* i. 6; and in other places; and for the *Spirit* of God, in *Gen.* i. 2. and chapter vi. 3. *Job* xxxiii. 4. and elsewhere: and so likewise the Greek word *πνευμα*, is used for them both, for the *wind* in this place, and often for the *Holy Ghost*. And it may be observed, that the *Holy Spirit*, because of his powerful, comfortable, and quickening influences, is compared to the wind, especially to the *south wind*, in some passages of the Old Testament, which Christ might have in view, *Canticles* iv. 16. *Zech.* ix. 14. What our Lord here says, concerning the wind, is confirmed by all experience, and philosophical observations; the rise of winds, from whence they come, and whither they go, cannot be ascertained; the treasures of them are only with God, and known to him; see *Ecc.* xi. 5.

9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

Nicodemus remaining still as ignorant as ever, though Christ had explained the phrase *born again*, at which he stumbled, by a being *born of water and of the Spirit*, or of the grace of the Spirit of God; and had illustrated this by the free, powerful, and invisible blowing of the wind, said,

How can these things be?] The Arabic version reads, "how can this be?" referring either to

the last thing said, that a man's being born of the Spirit, is like the blowing of the wind; or to the explanation of the first expression, that a man should be born of water, and of the Spirit; or to the first assertion itself, that a man should be born again; which, notwithstanding the explanation and illustration, seemed as impossible, and as impracticable as ever; or rather to them all, and so the Persian version reads, "how can all these things be?"

10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

Jesus answered, upbraiding him with his continued and invincible ignorance, which was aggravated by his dignified character:

Art thou a master in Israel?] Or *of Israel*, as all the Oriental versions render it, as it literally may be rendered. He was one of the *חכמי ישראל* "wise men, or doctors of Israel (*d*)," so often mentioned by the Jews. One of the Jewish doctors was answered, by a boy, just in such language as is here used; who, not understanding the direction he gave him about the way into the city, said to him, *אתה הוא חכם של ישראל* "Art thou he, a doctor, or master of Israel?" Did "not I say to thee so (*e*)," &c. He was not a common teacher; nor a teacher of babes, nor a teacher in their synagogues, or in their midrashim, or divinity schools, but in their great sanhedrim; and the article before the word used will admit it to be rendered, *that master*, doctor, or teacher; that famous, and most excellent one, who was talked of all over Jerusalem and Judea, as a surpassing one: and now, though he was not only an Israelite, with whom were the laws, statutes, judgments, and oracles of God, the writings of Moses and the prophets; but a teacher of Israelites, and in the highest class of teachers, and of the greatest fame among them, yet was he ignorant of the first and most important things in religion:

And knowest not these things?] Which were so plainly suggested in the sacred writings, with which he was, or ought to have been conversant: for the same things Christ had been speaking of, are there expressed by a circumcision of the heart; by a birth, a nation's being born at once; by sanctification; by the grace of God, signified under the metaphor of water; and by quickening persons, comparable to dry bones, through the wind blowing, and breathing into them, *Deut.* xxx. 6. *Isaiah* xlix. 21. and chap. lxvi. 8. *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25. and chapter xxxvii. 9, 10.

11 Verily,

(d) Derech Eretz, fol. 15. 2.

(e) Echa Rabbati, fol. 44. 4.

11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

Meaning, by *we*, either himself, and John the Baptist his forerunner, who preached the same doctrine of regeneration, internal sanctification, and evangelical repentance, as well as outward reformation, as necessary to an entrance into the kingdom of heaven, or the Gospel-dispensation, he declared was just at hand; or his disciples with himself, who were now with him, and whom he had called to preach the same truths he himself did; or the prophets of the Old Testament, who agreed with him in these things; or the Father, that was with him, and never left him alone, and the Holy Spirit, that was upon him, by whom he was anointed to preach these things, and who spoke them in him: or else he may use the plural number of himself alone, as being one in authority, and speaking with it, as he sometimes did, *Mark* iv. 20. And the rather this seems to be the sense, since he immediately, in the next verse, speaks in the singular number, *If I have told you earthly things, &c.* Now Christ must needs thoroughly and certainly know what he spoke, since he was not only the omniscient God, but, as mediator, had all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in him, and the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge rested on him:

And testify that we have seen]. And therefore ought to have been received as a credible witness, as he was a faithful one; since *seeing* and *knowing* are qualifications in a witness, *Lev.* v. 1. and though these were eminently in Christ, the generality of the Jews gave no credit to his testimony:

And ye received not our witness]. Which was an aggravation of their sin and unbelief; see *Y.* 32.

12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

Not that the doctrines he delivered were *earthly* ones; for he was not of the earth, but from heaven, and above all; and so spake not of the earth, but of heaven, *Y.* 31. and this doctrine of regeneration was an heavenly doctrine; and the thing itself required supernatural power, and grace from above: but either they were the more easy doctrines of the Gospel; or were delivered in a plain and easy stile, and illustrated by similes taken from earthly things, as from human birth, from the water, and from the wind:

And ye believe not]. That is, believe not those things; ye do not receive them, nor give credit to them; or *me*, as the Ethiopic version adds, who

relate them on the best evidence, having fully known, and clearly seen them:

How shall ye believe]. Give credit to me, or receive my testimony,

If I tell you of heavenly things?]. Of the more sublime doctrines of the Gospel, such as the descent of the Messiah from heaven; the union of the two natures, human and divine, in him; his being the only-begotten Son of God; his crucifixion and death, signified by the lifting up of the serpent on a pole in the wilderness; and the wonderful love of God to the Gentile world, in giving Christ to, and for them; and the salvation, and eternal happiness of all that believe in him, whether they be Jews or Gentiles; and these delivered in language suitable to them, without figures, or natural similes, which help the understandings, and convey ideas of things more easily to it.

13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

Though Enoch and Elias had ascended thither, yet not by their own power, nor in the sense our Lord designs; whose meaning is, that no man had, or could go up to heaven, to bring from thence the knowledge of divine and heavenly things; in which sense the phrase is used in *Deut.* xxx. 12. *Rom.* x. 6. and which may be illustrated by *John* i. 18. Wherefore inasmuch as Nicodemus had acknowledged Christ to be a teacher come from God; our Lord would have him know, that he was the only teacher of heavenly things, as being the only person that had been in heaven, and in the bosom of the Father; and therefore if he, and the rest of the Jews, did not receive instructions from him, they must for ever remain ignorant; for there never had been, nor was, nor could be, any mere man that could go up to heaven and learn the mysteries of God, and of the kingdom of heaven, and return and instruct men in them:

But he that came down from heaven]. Meaning himself, who is the Lord from heaven, and came from thence to do the will of God, by preaching the Gospel, working miracles, obeying the law, and suffering death in the room of his people; and thereby obtaining eternal redemption for them. Not that he brought down from heaven with him either the whole of his human nature, or a part of it; either an human soul, or an human body; nor did he descend locally, by change of place, he being God omnipresent, infinite and immense, but by assumption of the human nature into union with his divine person:

Even the Son of man which is in heaven]. At the same time he was then on earth: not that he was

B b b in

in heaven in his human nature, and as he was the Son of man; but in his divine nature, as he was the Son of God; see *John* i. 18. though this is predicated of his person, as denominated from the human nature, which was proper to him only in his divine nature; for such is omnipresence, or to be in heaven and earth at the same time: just as, on the other hand, God is said to purchase the church with his blood, and the Lord of glory is said to be crucified, *Acts* xx. 28. *1 Cor.* ii. 8. where those things are spoken of Christ, as denominated from his divine nature, which were proper only to his human nature; and is what divines call a communication of idioms or properties; and which will serve as a key to open all such passages of scripture: and now as a proof of our Lord's having been in heaven, and of his being a teacher come from God, and such an one as never was, or can be, he opens and explains a type respecting himself, in the following verse;

14. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

As Moses, &c.] The history referred to is in *Numbers* xxi. 8. There is, in many things, an agreement between this serpent, and Jesus Christ: as in the matter of it, it was a brazen serpent; it was made not of gold, nor of silver, but of brass, the meaner metal, and was a very unlikely means, of itself, to heal the Israelites; and might be despised by many. This may denote the meanness of Christ in his human nature, in his birth and parentage, and place of education and converse; and especially in his crucifixion and death: and which, to an eye of carnal sense and reason, seemed a very improbable means of saving sinners; and therefore were to some a *stumblingblock*, and to others *foolishness*: though on the other hand, as brass is a shining metal, and might be chose for the serpent in the wilderness to be made of, that by the lustre of it the eyes of the Israelites might be attracted and directed to it, who were at the greatest distance in the camp; so it may be expressive of the glory of Christ, as the only-begotten of the Father, and who is *the brightness of his Father's glory*; and which is the great attractive, motive, and inducement to engage souls to look unto him, and believe in him, *Isa.* xlv. 22. and whereas brass is both a strong and durable metal, it may signify the strength of Christ, who is the mighty God, and mighty to save; and his duration, as a Saviour, being *the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever*. Likewise, the comparison between the serpent Moses lifted up, and Christ, may be observed in the form of it. The brazen serpent

had the form of a serpent, but not the poison and venomous nature of one; so Christ was sent *in the likeness of sinful flesh*, and was found in fashion as a man, as a sinful man, but was without sin, and was perfectly holy; and yet being in this form, was made both sin and a curse, that he might redeem his people both from sin, and from the curse of the law, by dying a death which denominated him accursed; of which the serpent was an emblem. Besides, this serpent was a fiery one; at least it looked like one of the fiery serpents, being of brass, which shone as though it burned in a furnace; and may be an emblem both of Christ's Father's wrath, which was poured out like fire upon him, and of his love to his people, which was like burning fire, the coals whereof gave a most vehement flame. Moreover, this serpent Moses made, and was ordered to make, was but one, though the fiery serpents with which the Israelites were bitten, were many: so there is but one Mediator between God and man; but one Saviour, in whom alone is salvation, and in no other, even Jesus Christ. To which may be added, the situation in which this serpent was put: it was set by Moses on a pole; it was lifted up on high, that every one in the camp of Israel might see it; and may point out the ascension of Christ into heaven, and his exaltation at God's right hand there, as some think; or his being set up in the ministry of the word, and held forth and exalted there as the only Saviour of lost sinners; or rather his crucifixion, which is sometimes expressed by a lifting up, *John* viii. 28. and chap. xii. 32. Once more, there is an agreement in the effect that followed upon the lifting up of the serpent; and which was the design of it, namely, the healing of such Israelites as were bitten by the fiery serpents, who looked to this: for as the Israelites were bitten by fiery serpents, with the poison of which they were infected, and were in danger of death, and to many of them their bitings were mortal; so men are poisoned with the venom of the old serpent the devil, by which they are subjected to a corporal death, and are brought under a spiritual, or moral death, and are liable to an eternal one. And as these bitings were such as Moses could not cure; so the wounds of sin, through the old serpent, are such as cannot be healed by the law, moral or ceremonial, or by obedience to either. And as they were the Israelites who were convinced of their sin, and acknowledged it, and had a cure by looking to the brazen serpent; so such whom the Spirit of God convinces of sin, and to whom he gives the seeing eye of faith, these, through seeing the Son, and looking to Jesus, as crucified and slain, receive healing by his stripes and wounds. And as those who

who were ever so much bit and poisoned by the fiery serpents, or were at ever so great a distance from the pole, or had the weakest eye, yet if they could but discern the serpent on the pole, though it only appeared as a shining piece of brass, had a cure; so the greatest of sinners, and who are afar off from God, and all that is good, and who have faith but as a grain of mustard-seed, or but a glimmering view of Christ, of his glory, fulness, and suitability, shall be saved by him. To add no more, this was done

In the wilderness] Which may signify this world, Christ's coming into it, his crucifixion in it, and his going without the camp, bearing our reproach, or suffering without the gates of Jerusalem. It is certain, that the Jews had a notion that the brazen serpent was symbolical and figurative: Philo the Jew makes it to be a symbol of fortitude and temperance (*f*); and the author of the apocryphal book of *Wisdom* (*g*), calls it, *a sign of salvation*. They thought there was something mysterious in it: hence they say (*h*), "In four places it is said, *Make thee*, &c. In three places it is explained, namely, *Gen. vi. 14. Numb. x. 2. Josh. v. 2.* and one is not explained, *Numb. xx. 8. make thee a fiery serpent*, *לֵאשׁוּר* "is not explained." And elsewhere (*i*) they ask, "And could the serpent kill, or make alive? But at the time that Israel looked up, and served with their hearts their Father which is in heaven, they were healed; but if not, they were brought low." So that the look was not merely to the brazen serpent, but to God in heaven; yea, to the Word of God, his essential *Logos*, as say the Targumists on *Numbers* xxi. 9. The Jerusalem Targum paraphrases the words thus: "And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a high place, and whoever was bitten by the serpents, and lift up his face in prayer to his Father which is in heaven, and looked upon the serpent of brass, lived." And Jonathan ben Uzziel paraphrases them thus: "And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it on a high place; and it was, when a serpent had bitten any man, and he looked to the serpent of brass, and directed his heart, *לְשׁוֹן* "to the name of the Word of the Lord, he lived." And this healing they understand not only of bodily healing, but of the healing of the soul: for they observe (*k*), that "As soon as they said, *We have sinned*, immediately their iniquity was expiated; and they had the good news brought them of the healing of the soul; as it is written, *Make thee a serpent*; and he does

"not say a serpent; and this is it: *And it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live*, *וְכָל הַנִּשְׁחָטִים בָּהּ יִחְיֶה* "thru' the healing of the soul." Yea, they compare the Messiah to a serpent; for so the Targum on *Isaiah* xiv. 29. paraphrases that passage: "The Messiah shall come forth from Jesse's childrens children; and his works shall be among you as a flying serpent." And who else can be designed by the "other serpent of life (*l*)," and "the holy serpent (*m*), they speak of, in opposition to the evil serpent that seduced Eve?" And it is well known that *נָחִיָּה* "a serpent," and *מָשִׁיחַ* "Messiah," are numerically, or by gematry, the same; a way of interpretation and explanation often in use with the Jews. Now, as this serpent was lifted up on a pole on high, that every one that was bitten with the fiery serpent might look to it, and be healed;

Even so must the Son of man be lifted up] Upon the cross, and die: the crucifixion and death of Christ were necessary, and must be, because of the decrees and purposes of God, by which he was foreordained thereunto, and by whose determinate counsel he was delivered, taken, crucified, and slain; and because of his own engagements as a surety, laying himself under obligations in the council and covenant of peace, to suffer, and die, in the room of his people; and because of the prophecies of the Old Testament, and his own predictions, that so it should be; as also, that the antitype might answer the type; and particularly, that he might be a suitable object of faith for wounded sinners, sensible of sin, to look unto.

15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

Whether Jew or Gentile, a greater, or a lesser sinner; and of whatsoever state and condition, age or sex; and though ever so weak a believer, provided his faith is of the right kind: not an historical or temporary one, a mere assent to the truth of things respecting his person, office, and work; but such a faith, by which a soul sees a glory, fulness, and suitability in him as a Saviour; goes to him, ventures on him, commits itself to him, lays hold on him, and receives him, leans and relies upon him, and trusts in him, and lives upon him; and which is the faith of God's elect; a gift of his grace, and the operation of his Spirit; and which works by love, and is attended with the fruits of righteousness. Now the end of Christ's crucifixion and death is, that such an one

Should not perish] Though he is in a lost and perishing condition in Adam, and by nature, and

sees

(f) De Agricult. p. 202. & Allegor. l. 9. p. 1101—1101.

(g) Chap. 16. 6.

(h) T. Hierol. Rosh Hashanah, fol. 59. 1.

(i) Mish. Rosh Hashanah, c. 3. §. 8.

(k) Tzeror Hammor, fol. 123. 2.

(l) Zohar in Gen. fol. 36. 2.

(m) Tikkune Zohar in Jetsira, p. 134.

sees himself to be so, and comes to Christ as such; and though his frames and comforts are perishing, and he sometimes fears he shall be utterly lost; and though he is subject to slips and falls, and great spiritual decays; and shall perish, as to the outward man, by death; yet he shall never perish eternally, or be punished with everlasting destruction, as the wicked will: and thus shall show the end.

But have eternal life. Not by his works, but as the gift of God: and which he that truly believes has already in the covenant of grace, in Christ his head, in faith and hope; and has the earnest and pledge of it, the Spirit of God; and the beginning of it, which is the knowledge of God in Christ; and shall hereafter possess it fully, and in person, to all eternity: even a life of perfect holiness and knowledge; a life of never-ending pleasure; a life free from all the sorrows, distresses, and imperfections of the present; and which will always continue.

16 ¶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

God so loved the world, &c.] The Persic version reads *men*; but not every man in the world is here meant, or all the individuals of human nature; for all are not the objects of God's special love, which is here designed, as appears from the instance and evidence of it, the gift of his Son: nor is Christ God's gift to every one; for to whomsoever he gives his Son, he gives all things freely with him; which is not the case of every man. Nor is human nature here intended, in opposition to, and distinction from the angelic nature; for though God has shewed a regard to fallen men, and not to fallen angels; and has provided a Saviour for the one, and not for the other; and Christ has assumed the nature of men, and not angels; yet not for the sake of all men, but the spiritual seed of Abraham; and besides, it will not be easily proved, that human nature is ever called *the world*: nor is the whole body of the chosen ones, as consisting of Jews and Gentiles, here designed; for though these are called *the world*, John vi. 33, 51. and are the objects of God's special love, and to them Christ is given, and they are brought to believe in him, and shall never perish, but shall be saved with an everlasting salvation; yet rather the Gentiles particularly, and God's elect among them, are meant, who are often called *the world*, and *the whole world*, and *the nations of the world*, as distinct from the Jews; see Rom. xi. 12, 15. 1 John ii. 2. Luke xii. 30. compared with Matt. vi. 32. The Jews had the same distinction we have now, *the church and the world*; the former they took to themselves, and

the latter they gave to all the nations around. Hence we often meet with this distinction, *Israel*, and *the nations of the world*; on those words, "Let them bring forth their witness, that they may be justified," *Isaiah* xliii. 9. (say *(u)* the doctors) "these are *Israel*; or, Let them hear and say it is truth, these are *the nations of the world*." And again (a), "The holy, blessed God said to *Israel*, "When I judge *Israel*, I do not judge them as the *nations of the world*." And so in a multitude of places: and it should be observed, that our Lord was now discoursing with a Jewish Rabbi, and that he is opposing a commonly received notion of theirs, that when the Messiah came, the Gentiles should have no benefit or advantage by him, only the Israelites; so far should they be from it, that, according to their sense, the most dreadful judgments, calamities, and curses, should befall them; yea, hell and eternal damnation. There is a place they say (p), the name of "which is *Hadrach*," *Zech.* ix. 1. This is the king Messiah, who is, "חַדְרָךְ "sharp and tender;" sharp to the nations, and tender to *Israel*." And so of the *sun of righteousness*, in *Malachi* iv. 2. they say (q), "There is healing for the Israelites in it, but the idolatrous nations shall be burnt by it." And (r) that "there is mercy for *Israel*, but judgment for the rest of the nations." And on those words, in *Isa.* xxi. 12. *The morning cometh, and also the night*; they observe (s), "The morning is for the righteous, and the night for the wicked; the morning is for *Israel*, and the night for the nations of the world." And again (t), "In the time to come, (the times of the Messiah) the holy, blessed God, will bring darkness upon the nations, and will enlighten *Israel*, as it is said, *Isaiah* lx. 2." Once more (u), "In the time to come, the holy blessed God will bring the nations of the world, and will cast them into the midst of hell under the Israelites, as it is said, *Isaiah* xliii. 3." To which may be added that denunciation of theirs (x), "Wo to the nations of the world, who perish, and they know not that they perish: in the time that the sanctuary was standing, the altar atoned for them; but now, who shall atone for them?" Now, in opposition to such a notion, our Lord addresses this Jew; and it is as if he had said, "You Rabbins say, that when the Messiah comes, only the Israelites, the peculiar favourites of God, shall share in the blessings that come by, and with him; and

(u) T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 2. 1.

(p) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 92. 2. & Bereshit Rabba, fol. 11. 3.

(q) Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 24. 1. Jarchi & Kimchi in *Zech.* ix. 1.

(r) Zohar in Gen. fol. 112. 2. (s) Ibid. in Exod. fol. 5. 2.

(t) T. Hieros. Taaniet, fol. 64. 1. (u) Shemot Rabba,

§. 14. fol. 99. 4. (x) Ibid. §. 12. fol. 92. 3.

(y) T. Bab. Succa, fol. 55. 2.

and that the Gentiles shall reap no advantage by him, being hated of God, and rejected of him: but I tell you, God has so loved the Gentiles, as well as the Jews,

That he gave his only-begotten Son.] To, and for them, as well as for the Jews; to be a covenant of the people, the Gentiles, the Saviour of them, and a sacrifice for them." A gift which is a sufficient evidence of his love to them; it being a large and comprehensive one, an irreversible and unspeakable one; no other than his own Son by nature, of the same essence, perfections, and glory with him; begotten by him in a way inconceivable and inexpressible by mortals; and his only-begotten one; the object of his love and delight, and in whom he is ever well pleased; and yet, such is his love to the Gentiles, as well as Jews, that he has given him, in human nature, up into the hands of men, and of justice, and to death itself:

That whosoever believeth in him.] Whether Jew or Gentile,

Should not perish, but have everlasting life.] See the note on the preceding verse.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

For God sent, &c.] God did send his Son into the world in the likeness of sinful flesh, being made of a woman, and made under the law; and which is an instance of his great love, and not of any disrespect to his Son, or of any inequality between them: but then this was not

To condemn the world.] Even any part of it, or any in it: not even the Gentiles, as the Jews thought he would; for though God had suffered them to walk in their own ways, and had winked at, or overlooked the times of their ignorance, and had sent no prophet unto them, nor made any revelation of his will, or any discovery of his special grace unto them; yet he sent his Son now, not to destroy them for their idolatry and wickedness, but to be the Saviour of them: nor the Jews; for as impenitent and unbelieving, and as wicked as they were, he did not accuse them to the Father, nor judge and condemn them; he was to come again in power and great glory, when he would take vengeance on them, and cause wrath to come upon them to the uttermost, for their disbelief and rejection of him; but this was not his business now: nor the wicked of the world in general; to judge, and condemn them, will be his work when he comes a second time, in the day God has appointed to judge the world in righteousness. But the end of his mission, and first coming is,

That the world through him might be saved.] Even the world of the elect in general, whom God determined to save, and has chosen, to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ, and has appointed Christ to be the salvation of; and who being sent, came into the world to seek and save them; and his chosen people among the Gentiles in particular: wherefore he is said to be God's salvation to the ends of the earth; and all the ends of the earth are called upon to look unto him, and be saved by him, *Isaiah* xlix. 6. and chapter xlv. 22.

18 ¶ He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

He that believeth, &c.] Whether Jew or Gentile, because a believer is openly in Christ; and there is no condemnation to those that are in him: and though the sentence of death passed upon all in Adam, and judgment came upon all men to condemnation in him; yet this sentence being executed on Christ, the surety of his people, who has been condemned to death, and has suffered it in their stead, his death is a security to them from all condemnation; and they are delivered by him from the curse and condemnation of the law: and having in conversion openly passed from death to life, they shall never enter into condemnation; and this is the happy case of every one that believes in Christ:

But he that believeth not is condemned already.] The Persian version renders it, "from the beginning;" he remains under the sentence of condemnation, passed in Adam upon him; the law accuses him, and pronounces him guilty before God; he is under the curse of it, and it is a ministration of condemnation and death to him; nor has he any thing to secure him from its charge, curse, and condemnation: this must be understood of one that is a final unbeliever, or that lives and dies in a state of impenitence and unbelief:

Because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.] Whom God has sent to be the Saviour of lost sinners, and to deliver them from wrath to come; and there is no other name but his whereby men can be saved; so that those who do not believe in him, must be damned.

19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

And

And this, &c.] The condemnation of him that believes not in Christ; that is, this is the matter and cause of his condemnation, and by which it is aggravated, and appears to be just:

That light is come into the world] By which is meant, not natural, or corporal light; though natural darkness is, by some, preferred to this, being more convenient for their evil works; as by thieves, murderers, and adulterers: nor is the light of nature designed, with which every man is enlightened that comes into the world; which, though but a dim light, might be of more use and service than it is; and is often rejected and rebelled against by wicked men; and which will be the condemnation of the heathen world: but rather, the light of divine revelation, both in the law of God, and Gospel of Christ, especially the latter, is here intended; and which, though so great a favour to fallen men, is despised, and denied by the sons of darkness: though it may be best of all to understand it of Christ himself, the light of the world, and who is come a light into it; see *John* viii. 12. and chap. xii. 46. who may be called *light*, because he has set revelation in its clearest and fullest light; he has declared the whole mind and will of God concerning the affair of divine worship, and the business of salvation: *grace and truth* are come by him; the doctrines of grace, and the truths of the Gospel, are most clearly brought to light by him; the types and shadows of the law are removed; and the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament, are most largely expounded by him, and most perfectly fulfilled in him: and besides, he is the author and giver of the light of grace, by which men see themselves to be what they are, lost and undone sinners; and see him to be the only able, willing, suitable, sufficient, and compleat Saviour: and he it is that now gives the saints the glimpse of glory they have, and will be the light of the new Jerusalem, and the everlasting light of his people hereafter. He, by his incarnation, may be said to *come into the world* in general, which was made by him, as God; and he was in it, as man; though he was not known by it as the God-man, Mediator, and Messiah: and particularly he came into the Jewish world, where he was born, brought up, conversed, lived, and died; and into the Gentile world, by the ministry of his apostles, whom he sent into all the world, to *preach the Gospel to every creature*, and spread the glorious light of it in every place:

And men loved darkness rather than light] The Jews, the greater part of them, preferred the darkness of the ceremonial law, and the Mosaic dispensation, and even the traditions of their elders, before the clear Gospel-revelation made by Christ Jesus; and the Gentiles also, for the most part,

chose rather to continue in their heathenish ignorance and idolatry, and to walk in their own ways, and in the vanity of their minds, than to embrace Christ and his Gospel, and submit to his ordinances and appointments; and the generality of men, to this day, love their natural darkness, and choose to walk in it, and to have fellowship with the works of darkness, and delight in the company of the children of darkness, rather than follow Christ the light of the world, receive his Gospel, and walk in his ways in fellowship with his saints: the reason of all this is,

Because their deeds were evil] Which they chose not to relinquish; and Christ, his Gospel and ordinances, are contrary to them; for the doctrine of the grace of God, which has appeared, and shone out in great lustre and splendor, in the world, teaches men to *deny ungodliness and worldly lusts*; and therefore it is hated and rejected by men.

20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

Every man, the series of whose life and conversation is evil, hates Christ and his Gospel, because they make manifest his evil deeds, convict him of them, and rebuke him for them:

Neither cometh to the light] To hear Christ preach, or preached; to attend on the Gospel-ministration and means of grace:

Lest his deeds should be reproved] Or discovered, and made manifest, and he be brought to shame, and laid under blame, and advised to part with them, which he cares not to do; see *Eph.* v. 11—13.

21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

That doth that which is true, right and good: "he whose work is just," as the Ethiopic version renders it; or, "he who does that which is right," so the Persian; that which is according to the will of God, and from a principle of love to him, and with a view to his glory:

Cometh to the light] To Christ, and to his word and ordinances:

That his deeds may be made manifest] Being brought to the light, to the test and standard, whether they are right, or wrong; and that it may appear,

That they are wrought in God] Or by God; by his assistance, and gracious influence, without which men can do nothing; for it is God that *works in them both to will and to do*: or, "according to God," as others render it; according to the will of God, both for matter and manner; or *for God*, as the Ethiopic

Ethiopic version renders it; for the glory of God, which ought to be the aim and end of every action. The Perfic version reads the whole thus, "that the work which is between God and him may be known;" that such deeds may be discovered, which are only known to God and himself.

22 ¶ After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.

After these things, &c.] After Christ's coming to Jerusalem, at the feast of the passover, with his disciples, and driving the buyers and sellers from the temple, and doing the miracles he did there, upon which many believed on him; and after the long discourse he had with Nicodemus concerning regeneration, and other things:

Came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea

Or "into Judea, the country," having been in "Jerusalem, the city-part or chief city in Judea; so that the country is distinguished from, and opposed to the city. And thus, a countryman, and a Jerusalemite, or citizen of Jerusalem, are distinguished (*y*), "If, חקרת "a countryman," "one that lives in the country any where in the "land of Israel, out of (*z*) Jerusalem receives a "field, מירושלם "from a man of Jerusalem," "the second tithes belong to the Jerusalemite: "but the wise men say, the countryman may "bring them up, and eat them at Jerusalem." Or, it may be, because that Jerusalem was part of it in the tribe of Benjamin, and the other in the tribe of Judah; therefore when Christ and his disciples left Jerusalem, they might more properly be said to come into the land of Judea. Indeed, it is commonly said by the Jews (*a*), that Jerusalem was not divided among the tribes, and that it did not belong to any tribe; and if so, then with greater propriety still might Christ be said to come into the land of Judea, when he departed from Jerusalem; unless it should be thought, that he went into Galilee, and after that came into the land of Judea; so Nonnus:

And there he tarried with them] With his disciples, as Nonnus; and with the inhabitants of those parts: he made a longer stay here than at Jerusalem; having more work to do here, and being more delighted with the plainness and simplicity of the country people; or "he conversed "with them," as the Syriac version renders it; he exercised, and employed himself among them, as the Greek word used signifies: he went about from village to village, doing good, healing diseases, and preaching the Gospel, which was made useful to many:

And baptized] Not he himself, but his disciples, by his orders, and in his name; see chapter iv. 2. whereby he gave fresh countenance and sanction to the ordinance of water-baptism, administering it to others, as well as submitting to it himself.

23 ¶ And John also was baptizing in Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.

The Syriac and Perfic versions call it *Ain*, or *In-yon*, "the fountain of the dove;" and the Arabic version reads it, "the fountain of Nun:" and whether it was a town or river, it seems to have its name from a fountain near it, or that itself was one, where was an abundance of water, as the text shews. There is a city of this name in the Septuagint version of *Josbua* xv. 61. and mention is made of *Hazer Enon* in *Numbers* xxxiv. 9. *Ezek.* xlvii. 17. but neither of them seem to be the same with this: but be it where and what it will, it was

Near to Salim] And where that was, is as difficult to know as the other. Some take it to be *Shalem*, a city of Shechem, mentioned in *Genesis* xxxiii. 18. but that is not the same name with this; and besides was in Samaria; and indeed, is by some there thought not to be the proper name of any place. Others are of opinion, that it is the same with *Shalim* in *1 Sam.* ix. 4. though it seems rather to be the place which Arias Montanus calls (*b*), *Salim juxta torrentem*, "Salim by the "brook;" and which he places in the tribe of Issachar: and might be so called, either because it was near this Ænon, and may be the brook or river intended, by which it was; or because it was not far from the place where the two rivers, Jaboc and Jordan, met; and so the Jewish maps place near Jordan, in the tribe of Manasseh, bordering on the tribe of Issachar, a *Shalem*, and by it *Ain-yon*. And the Septuagint, in *Josb.* xix. 22. mention "Salim by the sea," as in the tribe of Issachar. There is a passage in the Talmud (*c*), which, whether it has any regard to this Ænon, and Salim, I leave to be considered: "The wine "of Ogedoth, why is it forbidden? Because of "the village Pegeth; and that of Borgetha, because "of the Saracene palace; and of Ain-Cushith, "because of the village Salem." Nonnus here calls Ænon, "a place of deep waters;" and Salim he reads *Salem*; and so some copies. Ænon where John baptized, according to Jerom (*d*), was eight miles from Scythopolis, to the south, and was near Salim and Jordan; and he makes Salim to be at the same distance from Scythopolis. However, John was baptizing in these parts, at the same time

(y) Nish. Demai, c. 6. §. 4.
in ibid.

(z) Maimon. & Bartenora
(a) T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 12. 1: & Meg. 11a, fol. 26. 1.

(b) Antiq. Jud. l. 2. c. 3.
fol. 44. 4.

(c) T. Hieros. Avoda Zara,
(d) De locis Hebraicis, fol. 39. C. & fol. 94. F.

time that Christ was teaching and baptizing: he did not leave off on that account. This was the work he was sent to do, and which he continued in as long as he had his liberty; and he chose this place,

Because there was much water there] Or "many waters;" not little purling streams and rivulets; but, as Nonnus renders it, abundance of water; or a multitude of it, as in the Arabic version; see *Rev. i. 15.* and chap. xvii. 1, 15. *Cant. viii. 7.* and the Septuagint in *Psal. lxxvii. 19.* and cvii. 23. and what was sufficient to immerse the whole body in, as Calvin, Aretius, Piscator, and Grotius, on the place, observe; and which was agreeable not only to the practice of the Jews, who used dipping in their baptisms and purifications, as Musculus and Lightfoot assert; but to John's method and practice elsewhere:

And they came, and were baptized] The Ethiopic version renders it, "they came to him," that is, to John, "and he baptized them;" as the Perfic version adds, *there*, in *Ænon*, near Salim, in the much water there. It may be understood of the people coming both to John and Christ, and of their being baptized by them; though it seems rather to be said of John; and so Nonnus paraphrases it.

24 For John was not yet cast into prison.

As he afterwards was by Herod, for the sake of Herodias, because he reproved Herod for taking her to be his wife, when she was wife to his brother Philip; see *Matt. xiv. 3, 4.* and this circumstance shews, that these things were done before that journey of Christ into Galilee, mentioned in *Matt. iv. 12, 13.*

25 ¶ Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.

A dispute, or controversy, occasioned by the baptism of John and Christ:

Between some of John's disciples and the Jews] The Syriac and Perfic versions read, "between one of John's disciples, and a certain Jew;" and Nonnus renders it, "with an Hebrew man;" and so the Alexandrian manuscript; many others read, "with a Jew:" the contention between them was about *purifying*; either about the ceremonial purifications, and ablutions commanded in the law of Moses; or concerning the various washings of persons and vessels, according to the traditions of the elders, which the Jews in common were very tenacious of; and which they thought were brought into neglect and contempt, by the baptism of John: and this seems to have been occa-

sioned by the baptism of Christ; which the Jew might improve against the disciple of John, and urge, that since another, besides his master, had set up baptizing, who could tell which was rightest and safest to follow; and therefore it would have been much better, if no such rite at all had been used by any, but that the purifications required by the law of Moses, and by their elders, had been strictly and solely attended to.

26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.

The Perfic version reads, "he came unto John;" that disciple that had the controversy with the Jew about purifying, who not knowing well how to answer him, and which might be the case of more, applied to John:

And said unto him, Rabbi] Or *Master*; or, *our Master*, as the Syriac and Perfic versions read, which was a title of great respect and reverence, and much in use in those times; see the notes on *Matt. xxiii. 7, 8.* The Arabic version joins this word to the following clause, and applies it to Christ, rendering it thus, "the master that was with thee beyond Jordan;" which is making them to speak more honourably of Christ than they intended; for though they speak very respectfully to John, yet with much disdain and neglect of Christ; not so much as mentioning his name, or using any term of honour and respect; only saying,

He that was with thee] Namely, at Bethabara; who came from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized by him, and who was baptized by him; and for some little time continued with him, and attended on his ministry; and as they thought was a disciple of John's:

To whom thou bearest witness] That he was before him, and to be preferred unto him; and that he was the Lamb of God, and even the Son of God; suggesting, that by this testimony of his, Christ had gained all the credit and reputation he had; and that therefore he had done a wrong thing in enlarging so much in the praise, and commendation of him:

Behold, the same baptizeth] Takes upon him to administer the ordinance of baptism; at least gives orders to administer it; which John's disciples thought was the proper, and peculiar business of their master; and therefore speak of this as an intrusion into his office, and an entering into his province; and an assuming that which only belonged to him: and what gave still more uneasiness, and increased the complaint, was,

And

And all men come to him] That is, *many*, as the Syriac and Persic versions render it, even more than came to John; see chapter iv. 1. Multitudes from all parts flocked to hear Christ preach, and great numbers were made disciples by him, and then baptized. That he should baptize, gave them great offence; and that he was so followed, raised their envy; and his being so near to John, might add to their uneasiness. It is a rule with the Jews, "That it is not lawful for a disciple to teach the constitutions, or sentences of the law before his master; but must be twelve miles distant from him, as the camp of Israel." And they say, that "A disciple that teaches before, or in the presence of his master, is guilty of (d) death."

27. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

John answered, &c.] The Syriac and Arabic versions add, *to them*; the answer being made to the disciples of John, who came to him with their complaint:

A man can receive nothing] The Syriac and Persic versions add, "of his own will:" some understand this of Christ, as man, who did not take upon him the character of the Messiah, nor the office of a mediator, nor the honour of it, of himself; and who received the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God without measure, and had his success in his work from above: and indeed, it is true of both Christ, and John; for as Christ, so John received his office and honour, as the harbinger and forerunner of Christ, and all his gifts qualifying him for it, and his success in it, not of himself, but of God: and since therefore the superior office, and honour, and usefulness of the one above the other, were according to the sovereign will of God, there was no room for complaint, murmuring, and envy; but there ought to be contentment and pleasure in the wise disposition of things by God. Yea, this is true of every man, who has nothing of his own; and whatever he has in nature, providence and grace, is a gift to him; and all he enjoys is in a way of receiving: nor can he receive it,

Except it be given him from heaven] From God who dwells there; see the note on *Matt. xx. 25.* who is the author and donor of every gift, temporal, spiritual, and eternal; particularly he cannot perceive and discern spiritual things, nor receive Gospel-truths; as it appeared to John, his disciples could not, unless spiritual light is given from above; and such a favour is bestowed, as to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven: and

therefore, for every office, whether of a superior, or inferior kind, and for every degree of honour, and for whatsoever blessing and gift, whether for soul or body, for time or for eternity, men ought to be thankful, and not glory in them, as though they had not received them; nor is there any reason to murmur against God, or envy one another, as these disciples did.

28. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.

They witnessed in what they now said, and referred to, in describing Christ, as he to whom John bore witness; and he appeals to them for what he said in their presence, and before all the people, in that testimony:

That I said, I am not the Christ] See chapter i. 19, 20. wherefore, if he, who is the Christ, is now come, and teaches, and baptizes, and has the greatest number of followers, it is not to be wondered at; and much less to be envied; but rather to be rejoiced at. For John, by repeating what he had before said, that he was not the Christ, suggests, that Jesus was; and therefore was superior to him in office, honour, and usefulness, who was only his harbinger and forerunner, as follows:

But I am sent before him] To prepare his way, to make straight his paths, to proclaim his coming and kingdom being at hand; and that the expectations of men may be raised, and they may be ready to receive him when come: and hereby the end of John's office and ministry had its accomplishment. The Ethiopic version adds, "to preach him."

29. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

He that hath the bride] By whom particular persons seem here to be meant, who were called, converted, and brought to Christ, and were made his disciples, and baptized, and so were openly espoused unto him; though sometimes it designs a particular church of Christ, and even the whole general assembly, and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven; all the elect of God, whether among Jews, or Gentiles; see *2 Cor. xi. 2.* *Rev. xxi. 2, 9.* These Christ has in a conjugal relation; and he came, and comes to have them after this manner: he saw them in his Father's purposes, and decrees, in all the glory he meant to bring them to; and loved them, and desired them of his Father, as his spouse, who gave them to him, as such; and he betrothed them to himself

himself for ever; and in time he sends his ministering servants with his Gospel, to engage and betroth them to him; and, by the power of his grace, he makes them willing to give up themselves to him; which is the open espousal of them; and at the last day, when the number of the elect are completed, the marriage of the Lamb will be publicly solemnized, and a marriage-supper will be made; and all that are called and ready, will enter into the marriage-chamber, and share in the joys and pleasures of that day. Thus by virtue of the Father's gift, Christ has them now as his own property, as his portion, his jewels, his bride, and wife; and by, and through his great love to them, he has them not only in his arms, from whence they can never be plucked; but in his heart, where they are set as a seal; and by virtue of this love, they are united to him, become one with him, are members of his body, flesh, and bones; and are one spirit with him, and nothing can be able to separate them; and he will have them all with him to all eternity, to be where he is, and behold his glory: and now, *he that has the bride*, in this sense,

Is the bridegroom] And such is Christ; see *Matt. ix. 15.* and chapter *xxv. 1.* and he acts and behaves as such; he loves the saints, as a bridegroom loves his bride, with a love prior to theirs: with a love of complacency and delight, which is single, chaste, and inviolable; free, and sovereign, wonderful, unchangeable, and from everlasting to everlasting: he sympathizes with them in all their adversities and afflictions; he nourishes, and cherishes them, and provides every thing for them, for food, and clothing, for refreshment, and protection; and interests them in all he has: and an amazing instance of grace this is, that such who are no better than others, children of wrath by nature; exceeding great sinners, guilty, and filthy; bankrupts, and beggars on the dunghil; and yet are taken into so near a relation to him; who is in the form of God, and equal to him, *the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person*, the Son of God, in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwells; the King of kings, and Lord of lords. And this being the case, John suggests, that by these persons following Christ, and giving up themselves to him, it appeared that he was the bridegroom; and to whom should they betake themselves but to him? Nor did it become him, or any other, to seek to draw them from him; nor should any envy his enjoyment of them, since they were his in so peculiar sense, and in so near a relation.

But the friend of the bridegroom] Meaning himself: and such is every true minister of the Gospel; he is a lover of Christ, a friend to his interest, and seeks by all means to promote it, and to

bring souls unto him. The allusion is to a custom among the Jews, who, at their marriages, used to have persons both on the side of the bride, and of the bridegroom, as companions that attended each, and were called their *friends*; see *Judges xiv. 20.* Such an one is called by the Rabbins, *חַוְוֵן* and this word is interpreted by, *חֶבֶד* "a lover, or friend;" the same as here; and by, *חֵרֵן* *his* (the bridegroom's) *friend* in the time of his marriage (*c*). There were two of these, one for the bride, and another for the bridegroom; for so it is said (*f*), "Formerly they appointed two, *חַוְוֵן* friends, "one for him, (the bridegroom) and one for her, " (the bride) that they might minister to the bridegroom, and do all things at their entrance into "the marriage-chamber.—And formerly, these "friends slept where the bridegroom and bride "slept." And so as John is here represented as the friend of Christ, the bridegroom of the church; the Jews speak of Moses as "the friend of God, the bridegroom of the people of Israel." So one of their writers (*g*), having delivered a parable concerning "A certain king going into a far country, "and leaving his espoused wife with his maid-servants, who raising an evil report on her, his "friend tore in pieces the matrimonial contract;" thus applies it: "The king, this is the holy, "blessed God; the maidens, these are the mixed "multitude; and *חַוְוֵן* "the friend," this is "Moses; and the spouse of the holy, blessed God, "is Israel." The Jews say (*b*), that Michael and Gabriel were the *חַוְוֵן* "bridal friends to the "first Adam."

Which standeth] The phrase may be seen in the above parable of the Jewish writer (*i*) referred to, *חַוְוֵן* *עַמּוּ* "his friend standeth." This was the posture of servants, and is fitly applied to John, who was the harbinger of Christ, and judged himself unworthy to bear his shoes; and well agrees with the ministers of the Gospel, who stand before Christ, wait upon him, and minister in his name, and are the servants of the churches for his sake.

And heareth him] Harkens to his words; observes, and obeys them; hears his voice, so as to understand it, and distinguish it from another's; and hears it with delight and pleasure, as every true friend of Christ does his Gospel, which is his voice, and is a joyful sound; and so

Rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice] Such an one rejoices at the sight of his person, and in communion with him; he rejoices at the sound of his voice; and is delighted to hear him in the ministry

(i) *Mishna Sanhedrim*, c. 3. §. 5. & *Bartenora* in *ibid.*

(f) *T. Bab. Orlotin*, fol. 12. 2.

(g) *Yacchi* in *Exod.*

xxiv. 1. *Vid. Shemot Rabba*, §. 46. fol. 142. 2.

(b) *Berechit Rabba*, §. 3. fol. 8. 2.

(i) *Yacchi* in *ibid.*

ministry of the word, calling to one and to another to come unto him, and causing them to believe in him, and give up themselves to him.

This my joy therefore is fulfilled] In Christ, he being come in person, and his voice heard in the land of Judea, and multitudes of souls flocking to him, who, believing in him, were baptized; than which, nothing could be a greater pleasure to John, or to any gospel-minister. This was the accomplishment and perfection of his joy, which carried it to its utmost height: this was what he wished for; and now he had the desire of his heart. It was usual for the friend of the bridegroom to carry provisions with him, and eat and drink with the bridegroom, and rejoice with him; and this rejoicing was mutual. Hence those words, "Give me, *my friend*," that I may rejoice "with him;" the gloss upon it is, "and eat at his marriage; even as he also rejoiced, and eat at my marriage (A)." To this rejoicing the allusion is here.

30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

Not in stature of body, or in wisdom and understanding of mind, as man, he being come to maturity in these things already; but in fame, credit, and reputation among men; as he afterwards did in the land of Judea, by reason of his miracles and doctrines; and after that among the Gentiles, through the publication of his Gospel; and will more and more in the latter day, when he, and he alone, shall be exalted: and *he must increase* in the ministry of his word, which was published by him and his disciples throughout all the cities of Israel; and which, after his resurrection and ascension, grew and increased mightily, notwithstanding the opposition made unto it both by their civil and ecclesiastical rulers; and which, by the means of his Apostles, was spread throughout the Gentile world, and will hereafter cover the earth, as the waters do the sea: and also in his kingdom and interest, which at first were very small, like a grain of mustardseed, or like a little stone cut out of the mountain without hands; but in process of time grew exceedingly, and will ere long fill the face of the whole earth; for *the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth; and of the increase of it there shall be no end.* And so likewise in the number of his followers, which at first were but a few in Judea only, but afterwards greatly increased, and especially among the Gentiles; and will be very numerous in the latter-day-glory, when the nation of the Jews will be *born at once*, and the fulness and forces of the Gentiles are brought in:

But I must decrease] As he did in his esteem among the people; see *John v. 35.* and in his work and office, which were now come to an end, Christ, whose forerunner he was, being come; and quickly after this he was cast into prison, and there put to death.

31 He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.

Meaning Christ; not that he brought his human nature with him from heaven; or that that is of a celestial kind; but he came from heaven in his divine person: not by change of place, he being God, immense and infinite, but by assumption of the human nature; which he took upon him, in order to do in it his Father's will, and the work of our salvation.

Is above all] Above John, before whom he was preferred, for he was before him; above the prophets of the Old Testament, and even above Moses, the chief of them; yea, above all the angels in heaven, being *God over all, blessed for ever*: wherefore all glory is to be given him; no honour is to be envied him, or detracted from him.

He that is of the earth] As John was, and all mankind are, being descended from Adam, who was made of the dust of the earth; and who dwell in houses of clay, and in earthly tabernacles, which are at last to be resolved into their original dust:

Is earthly] Of an earthly nature, frame, temper, and disposition; see *y. 6.* Men naturally mind earthly things; and it is owing to the Spirit and grace of God, if they mind and savour spiritual things, or have their affections set on things above, or their conversation in heaven; and even such, at times, find that their souls cleave unto the dust, and are hankering after the things of the earth:

And speaketh of the earth] Of earthly things, as in *y. 12.* and indeed of heavenly things in an earthly manner, in a low way, and by similes and comparisons taken from the things of the earth; not being able to speak of celestial things as they are in their own nature, and in that sublime way the subject requires: but

He that cometh from heaven is above all] Men and angels, in the dignity of his person; and all prophets and teachers, in the excellency of his doctrine, and manner of delivering it: and therefore it is not to be wondered at that he should be followed as he is; but rather it should seem marvellous, that he has no more followers than he has. See *2 Esdras iv. 21.*

(A) T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 144. 2. & 145. 1.

32 And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.

Seen and heard of the Father, of his mind and will, of his purposes and promises, of his love, grace, and mercy, in the council and covenant of peace, lying in his bosom, and being privy to all his secrets. The phrases express the clear and perfect knowledge Christ has of all truths and doctrines; he having all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in him.

That he testifieth] Fully, freely, and faithfully; withholds nothing, but declares the whole counsel of God; and is deservedly called *the faithful witness*, Rev. i. 5.

And no man receiveth his testimony] Though it was the testimony of God, which is greater than that of man; yet few, and which were next to none at all, gave any heed or credit to it; few or none among the Jews, or among the disciples of John, or even among those that followed Christ. John, and his disciples, widely differed; they thought that all men came to Christ, and believed in him; and John thought few or none, in comparison of the numbers he could have wished, did: and indeed, no one person can receive the testimony of Christ, and believe in him, unless it be given him from above, by the grace of God; for the natural man receives not divine and spiritual things; see y. 21.

33 He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.

For there was here and there one that received it, who believed in him as the Messiah, and embraced his Gospel, and submitted to his ordinances, and truly and sincerely followed him: and for the encouragement of such, it is said,

Hath set to his seal that God is true] Faithful in fulfilling the promises he has made concerning the Messiah, and his coming: he firmly believes that God is true to every word of his, and will make good every promise; and this he seals, ratifies, and confirms, by his embracing the testimony of Christ; whereas, on the contrary, *he that believeth not, makes God a liar*; than which, nothing can be more reproachful to him, 1 John v. 10. The Jews have a saying (1), "That the seal of the blessed God is truth." The Arabic version renders it, "he is already sealed, because God is true;" and the Ethiopic version, "God hath sealed him, because he is true;" namely, with his holy Spirit; see 2 Cor. i. 22. Eph. i. 13. and chap. iv. 30.

(1) T. Hieros. Sanhedrim, fol. 18. 1. & T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 64. 1. & Yoma, fol. 69. 2.

34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.

Still meaning Christ, who was sent in human nature, in the likeness of sinful flesh, in the fulness of time; to be the Saviour of the world; of that which was lost, of the chief of sinners; and to preach the glad tidings of the Gospel, which is more especially here designed; and for which he was abundantly qualified by the Spirit of God, with which he was anointed:

Speaketh the words of God] The words which God gave unto him; the doctrines of grace; the word of truth; the word of faith; the word of righteousness; the word of reconciliation; the words of salvation and eternal life; the whole mind and will of God; and whatever he spoke was as true as the oracles of God, and was such.

For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him] As he did to the prophets of the Old Testament, and to the apostles of the New; and to the ordinary ministers of the word, who have gifts differing one from another: to one is given one gift of the Spirit; and to another, another gift, as the Spirit pleaseth; and to every one is given grace, or gifts of grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ, Eph. iv. 7. To which agree what the Jews say (m) of the holy Spirit, and his gifts. "Says R. Joden bar R. Simeon, Even the waters which descend from above are not given, but בְּמִידָה "in measure."—Says R. Acha, Even the "holy Spirit, which dwells upon the prophets, does not dwell, but בְּמִשְׁקָל "in weight." But the Lord Jesus has every gift of the Spirit; and the fulness of grace in him: he is anointed with the oil of gladness, with the Holy Ghost, above his fellows; and has an immeasurable unction of the holy One; which, like the precious oil poured on Aaron, descends from him to the members of his body.

35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.

The Father, &c.] There is such a relation as that of the Father and Son subsisting between the first and second persons in the Trinity; which is not by constitution and appointment; or arbitrary, arising from, and depending on the will of the first, but is natural and necessary; the second person being begotten by the first, and is of the same nature, and equally a divine person; and which relation is the foundation of the distinction of their persons; and which existed from all eternity, and co-existed with their being and essence; and is

(m) Vaj. kras Rabba, §. 15. fol. 157. 3.

what no other stand in, angels or men, in such sense as the second person does; and is not to be conceived of, expressed and explained by us: and from this relation arises love; hence, the Son of the Father is his dear Son, the Son of his love; as he must needs be, since he is of the same nature, has the same perfections he has, and is *the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person*: and hence he continues to love him in every form and appearance of his; in every office he sustains; in every state and condition into which he comes: he delighted in him as his elect, as chosen and appointed by him to be the Saviour of his people; he took pleasure in him as the surety of them, and when he saw him engaging as such, and declaring it was in his heart to do his will, and work out their salvation; he loved him when he appeared in human nature, in the form of a servant; and in his state of humiliation, more than once he declared, by a voice from heaven, that he was his beloved Son, and particularly at his baptism: and indeed, as in that, so in every thing else, he always did the things that pleased him. He loved him when he laid down his life for the sheep; when he was bruised, and his soul made an offering for sin; he loved him when on the cross, and even when he hid his face from him; when he lay in the grave he left him not, nor would he suffer him to see corruption; he raised him from the dead, and gave him glory; exalted him, and received him into heaven with a welcome; and placed him at his right hand; and now looks with pleasure upon him, upon his person, his sacrifice, blood, and righteousness: and this love is a love of complacency and delight, and is from everlasting to everlasting; the evidence of which follows.

And hath given all things into his hand] Or by his hand; as the doctrines of the Gospel, the gifts of the Spirit, grace, and glory: or rather, *into his hand*; with which, he being the Son of God, a divine person, is fit to be entrusted, which otherwise he would not be: *namque*, all, includes all persons; all the angels, the good angels which are chosen in him, and he is the head of; and by whom they are confirmed in the state they are; and who are at his command and beck, and minister to him and his. The evil angels, though they have broke away from God, and rebelled against him, yet are, in some sense, in the hands of Christ, and under his power; as appears by his dispossessing them from the bodies of men on earth, his spoiling them on the cross, and triumphing over them in his ascension to heaven, and by his binding Satan a thousand years. All men are given to him; the elect, in a special sense, as his bride and spouse, as his children, and as his sheep; hence, he died for them, and effectually calls them, and

brings them to himself; and they shall never perish, or be plucked out of his hands, but shall have eternal life. And wicked men are, in a sense, given to him; their wrath he restrains, and makes it to praise him; he rules them with a rod of iron, and breaks them in pieces as a potter's vessel. And *all things also are given into his hand*; all temporal things, the things of nature and providence; the light of nature, and all the gifts and attainments of it; all the good things of the world, and which are Wisdom's left-hand-blessings; and Christ disposes of them to his people in mercy, and as covenant-ones: all spiritual things are in his hands; all the gifts of the Spirit, and the fulness of all grace, sanctifying, justifying, pardoning, adopting, and persevering grace; all the promises and blessings of the covenant; the government of the church, and the judgment of the world; all power, both in heaven and in earth; the salvation of the elect, and their eternal inheritance, happiness, and glory. For all which, no creature, angels or men, are fit, only the Son of God.

36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

The Son, who is a proper object of faith and trust; which, if he was not truly and properly God, he would not be: and this is to be understood not of any sort of faith, a temporary, or an historical one; but of that which is the faith of God's elect, the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit; by which a man sees the Son, goes unto him, ventures and relies upon him, and commits himself to him, and expects life and salvation from him; and who shall not be ashamed and confounded; for such an one.

Hath everlasting life] He has it in Christ his head, in whom he believes; he has a right unto it through the justifying righteousness of Christ, and a meetness for it by his grace; he has it in faith and hope; he has the beginning of it in the knowledge of Christ, and communion with him; he has some foretastes of it in his present experience; and he has the earnest and pledge of it in his heart, even the blessed Spirit, who works him up for this self-same thing:

And he that believeth not the Son] That does not believe Christ to be the Son of God, or Jesus to be the Messiah; or rejects him as the Saviour; who lives and dies in a state of impenitence and unbelief:

Shall not see life] Eternal life; he shall not enter into it, and enjoy it; he shall die the second death. Very remarkable are the following words of the

Jews

Jews (*) concerning the Messiah, whom they call the latter redeemer: "Whosoever believes in him shall live; but he that believes not in him shall go to the nations of the world, and they shall kill him."

But the wrath of God abideth on him] As the sentence of wrath, of condemnation, and death, and the curse of the law, were pronounced upon him in Adam, as on all mankind, it continues, and will continue, and will never be reversed, but will be executed on him, he not being redeemed from it, as his final unbelief shews; and as he was by nature a child of wrath, as others, he remains such; and as the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, it comes upon the children of disobedience and remains there; it hangs over their heads, and lights upon them, and they will be filled with a dreadful sense of it to all eternity. The Syriac and Arabic versions render it, "shall abide upon him;" so some copies.

CHAP. IV.

In this chapter we find that Jesus having left Judea, goeth into Galilee, ch. 1—3. He meeteth with a woman of Samaria, with whom he talketh of the living water, ch. 4—15, and telleth her the actions of her past life: from which she thinks he is a prophet, ch. 16—19. He teaches her concerning true worshiping, ch. 20—25, and telleth her that he is that Messiah that was to come: wherewith she acquaints the inhabitants of the city, ch. 26—30. He telleth his disciples what is his principal food, ch. 31—38. Many of the Samaritans believe on him, ch. 39—42, and coming to Cana of Galilee, he healeth the ruler's son, ch. 43—54.

WHEN therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,

When therefore, &c.] Or Jesus, as some copies, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Persian versions read; who is Lord of all, Lord of lords, the one and only Lord of saints; and who knew all things as God; every man, and what is in man; who would believe in him, and who not, and who would betray him: he knew his adversaries, what they thought, said, or did; what was told them, and how it operated in them; and what were the secret motions of their hearts, and their most private counsels and designs: for this is not merely to be understood of his knowledge as man, which he might have by private intelligence from others;

though what is here said might be true also in this sense:

How the Pharisees] The inveterate and implacable enemies of Christ, and particularly those that dwelt at Jerusalem, and were of the great sanhedrim, or council of the nation;

Had heard] Either by their spies, which they constantly kept about Christ; or by John's disciples, who, through envy, might apply to the sanhedrim to put a stop to, or check upon, the baptism and ministry of Christ; or by common fame:

That Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John] See chapter iii. 26. The method Christ took was, he first made men disciples, and then baptized them; and the same he directed his apostles to, saying, *Go and teach, or disciple all nations, baptizing them, &c.* And this should be a rule of conduct to us, to baptize only such who appear to have been made the disciples of Christ; now a disciple of Christ, is one that has learned of Christ, and has learned Christ; the way of life, righteousness, and salvation by him; who is a believer in him; who has seen a beauty, glory, fulness, and suitableness in him, as a Saviour; and is come to him, and has ventured on him, and trusted in him; and who has been taught to deny himself, sinful self, and righteous self; to part with his sins, and to renounce his own righteousness, and all dependence on it, for justification before God; and who has been made willing to leave and forsake all worldly things and advantages, and to bear all reproaches, indignities and persecutions, for Christ's sake: and such who are Christ's disciples in this sense, are the only proper persons to be baptized; these are they that ought to put on this badge, and wear Christ's livery: nor can baptism be of any use to others; for such only are baptized into him, and into his death, and partake of the saving benefits of it; for whatsoever is not of faith, is sin; and without faith also it is impossible to please God.

2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)

Though Jesus, &c.] And therefore as Nonnus observes, it was a false report that was made to the Pharisees; at least in part, so far as concerns the act of baptizing: though it may be this is observed, not so much to shew the falshood of that report, as to correct what is said of Christ's baptizing; lest it should be understood as if he baptized in his own person; whereas he did not, that not so well comporting with his greatness and majesty: wherefore the King did not baptize in water, as Nonnus expresses it, but lest that for his disciples and servants to do; he had other and greater work to perform, as to preach the Gospel, and work miracles, heal diseases, cast out devils, &c. And besides,

(*) Midrash Ruth, fol. 33. 2.

besides, had another sort of baptism, of a more excellent nature, to administer, namely, the baptism of the Spirit; and since water-baptism is administered in his name, as well as in the name of the Father and of the Spirit, it does not seem that it would have been administered with that propriety by himself, in his own name; add to which, as is also observed by others, it might have occasioned contentions and disputes among the baptized, had some been baptized by Christ, and others by his disciples, the one valuing themselves on that account above the others. The Persic version indeed suggests, as if both Christ and his disciples baptized, rendering the words thus; "Jesus was not alone who baptized, but the disciples also baptized:" whereas the truth of the matter is, that Christ did not baptize in water at all:

But his disciples.] They baptized in his name, and by his orders, such who were first made disciples by him.

3 He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.

He left Judea, &c.] Where he had been for some time: at the feast of the passover he went up to Jerusalem, and after a short stay there, he came into the country-part of Judea, where he tarried longer; and in both, about the space of eight months; for it was now but four months to harvest, which began at the passover; see chap. ii. 13. and iii. 22. and iv. 35. And now, upon the Pharisees being made acquainted with his success in these parts, he leaves them; not through fear of them; but because he would not irritate and provoke them, and stir up their malice and envy against him, which might put them upon measures to seek to take away his life; whereas his time was not yet come, and he had other work to do elsewhere:

And departed again into Galilee.] Where he had spent the greatest part of his time, in private life; from whence he came to Jordan unto John to be baptized by him; and after that went thither again, where he wrought his first miracle: and now having been in Judea some time, he removes to Galilee again; and of this journey of his thither, after the imprisonment of John, an account is given in *Matt.* iv. 12, 13. The Persic version leaves out the word *again*, and so doth the Alexandrian and many other copies; but is by others retained, and very justly.

4 And he must needs go through Samaria.

Not through the city, but the country of Samaria; for the way to Galilee from Judea, lay through the midst of Samaria; not was there any other way, without going a great way about; see

*Luke ix. 51, 52. and chap. xvii. 11. and which is also confirmed by Josephus (o): and this accounts for his going through Samaria, consistently with his forbidding his apostles going in the way of the Gentiles, or into any of the cities of the Samaritans; since here was a necessity for it, or otherwise he himself would not have gone, where he forbid his disciples to go; though the prohibition may be understood, not of barely going into a Samaritan city; for it was lawful for them, notwithstanding that, to go into one of them, as appears from *Mat. x. 8.* and *Luke ix. 52.* but of going to preach there, *Matt. x. 5-7.* And besides this necessity, there was another thing that lay upon him, and obliged him to take this town, and that is, the calling and conversion of a certain woman, and other Samaritans, whom the Father had given to him, and he was to redeem by his blood; and the time of whose effectual vocation was now come; and therefore he must needs go this way, and at this particular time. The Arabic and Persic versions represent it, as a purpose and determination in his mind to go this way.*

5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

Called Sychar, &c.] Now called Neapolis (p); the same with *Sichem*, or *Shechem*, as appears from its situation,

Near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.] See *Gen. xxxiii. 18, 19.* and chapter *xlviii. 22.* and *Joshua xxiv. 32.* and is either the same, only its termination is changed from *em* into *ar*, as *Achan* into *Achar*, *1 Chron. ii. 7.* Or it is a new name that was given it, and by which it went in the times of Christ; and might be so called, either from, *שחר* "Socher," which signifies a grave; because here, Joseph and the rest of the patriarchs were buried, *Joshua xxiv. 32. Acts xii. 17.* Or rather, it was a name of reproach, and so called, from, *שכר* "drunken;" since the Ephraimites, the posterity of Joseph, which dwelt in these parts, were infamous for their sin of drunkenness; see *Isaiah xxviii. 1.* Hence *Sychar*, *Sichem*, is "drunken Sichem;" or with respect to *Shekar*, a lie; as an idol is, and so may point at the idolatry of the Samaritans: and *Reland (q)* thinks some regard was had in this name to *Heb. ii. 18.* where a molten image is called *marah shekar*, and *marah* is a name given to *Shechem (r)*:

mention

(o) Antiqu. Jud. l. 20. c. 5. & in vita sua, p. 1099.

(p) Hieron. Epitaph. Paulæ, tom. 1. fol. 59. & R. Benjamin Jtin, p. 38. & T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 42. l. & 34. r. & Cholin, fol. 94. 2.

(q) Dissert. de Monte Tabor, §. 9. p. 141.

(r) T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 33. 2.

mention is made in the Talmud of a place called, סִיכְרָא "Sichra." The *parcel of ground*, or of a *field*, as in *Genesis xxxiii. 19.* and *Joshua xxiv. 32.* is in the *Perfic version*, called a *vineyard*; and so Nonnus renders it, "a field planted with vines;" and which may serve to confirm the above conjecture, concerning *Sychar* being a nick-name.

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.

A well so called, either because it was dug by Jacob; or because he and his family made use of it when in those parts, as in *Y. 12.* though no mention is made of it elsewhere, unless any reference is had to it in the blessing of Joseph, to whom this place belonged, *Genesis xlix. 22.* as Dr Lightfoot thinks, or in *Deut. xxxiii. 28.* as Grotius suggests: in the Talmud (s) there is mention made of, מְיַחַר מַי "the fountain of Sochar;" and may not improperly be rendered, "the well of Sychar;" but whether the same with this, is not certain; that appears to be a great way from Jerusalem, as this also was, even forty miles:

Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey] Having travelled on foot from Judea thither; and he having a body like to ours, subject to weariness, and which proves the truth and reality of it, was greatly fatigued; having very probably travelled all that morning, if not a day, or days before.

Sat thus on the well]. Or by it; by the side of it, upon the brink of it, as Nonnus paraphrases it, upon the bare ground. The Syriac, Arabic, and *Perfic versions*, leave out, *thus*; and the Ethiopic version reads it, *there*; but it is rightly retained, and is emphatical; and signifies, that he sat like a weary person, glad to set himself down any where; and not caring how or where, he sat to rest his weary limbs:

And it was about the sixth hour] About twelve o'clock at noon. The Ethiopic version adds by way of explanation, "and it was then noon;" and all the Oriental versions omit *was*, "about;" rendering it, it was the sixth hour: and now Christ had been travelling all the morning, and it was a time of day to take some refreshment; which as yet he had not, the disciples being gone to buy food; and a time of day also, when the sun, if out, and has any strength, beats with its greatest vehemence; and all which considered, it is no wonder that he should be weary, faint, and thirsty.

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to

draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

A woman "out of Samaria;" not out of the city of Samaria, but out of the country of Samaria; out of Sychar, a city of Samaria: her coming was not by chance, but by the providence of God, and agreeable to his purpose, who orders all things according to the counsel of his will. And it is an amazing instance of grace, that a woman, a Samaritan woman, a lewd and infamous one, should be a chosen vessel of salvation, should be the object of divine favour, and be effectually called by the grace of God; when so many wise, learned, and religious men in Judea, were passed by! And not only so, but she was the happy means of conveying the knowledge of the Saviour to many of her neighbours: she came indeed,

To draw water] For her present temporal use and service; she little thought of meeting at Jacob's well with Christ, the fountain of gardens, and well of living water; she came for natural water, having no notion of water in a spiritual sense; or of carrying back with her the water of life, even a well of it, springing up to everlasting life:

Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink]. That is, water to drink, out of the pot or pitcher she brought with her, for he was a-thirst; which is another proof of the truth of his human nature, and of his taking it with the sinless infirmities of it: though indeed this request was made to introduce a discourse with the woman, he having a more violent thirst, and a stronger desire, after the welfare of her immortal soul.

8 (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

This action of theirs is related, not so much to give a reason why Christ asked the woman for water, because his disciples were not present to minister to him; but rather to shew, that Christ took the opportunity, in their absence, to converse with her; partly to avoid the scandal and offence they might take at his conversation with her, being a Samaritan; as it appears to have been astonishing to them, when they found him talking with her, *Y. 27.* And partly, that he might not put the woman to shame and blushing before them all; he chooses to tell her of the sins of her former life, in a private way. The disciples were gone

Unto the city] To the city Sychar, which was hard by; and their business there, was

To buy meat]. For though it is said, in the following verse, that the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans; yet this is not to be understood in the

(s) T. H. of Shekalim, fol. 48. 4. T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 23. 2. & Menachor, fol. 64. 2. & Gl. II. in Sanhedrim, fol. 11. 2.

the strictest sense; for they had dealings with them in some respects, as will be seen hereafter; particularly their food, eatables and drinkables, were lawful to be bought of them, and used. It is said by R. Juda bar Pazi, in the name of R. Ame (i), "A roasted egg of the Cuthites, (or Samaritans) lo, this is lawful: says R. Jacob bar Acha, in the name of R. Lazar; the boiled victuals of the Cuthites, (Samaritans) lo, these are free; this he says concerning boiled food, because it is not their custom to put wine and vinegar into it;" for these were forbidden: hence it is often said (u), that "The unleavened bread of the Cuthites, (or Samaritans) is lawful, and that a man is allowed the use of it at the passover." And there was a time when their wine was lawful; for one of their canons runs thus (x); "He that buys wine of the Cuthites, (Samaritans) says, The two logs that I shall separate, lo, they are the first fruits, &c." It is indeed said in one place, by R. Eliezer (y), "That he that eats the bread of the Cuthites, (or Samaritans) is as if he eat swines flesh; to whom (who reported this) says (R. Akiba) Be silent, I will not tell you what R. Eliezer thinks concerning it." Upon which the commentators observe (z), that this is not to be understood strictly; because he that eats bread of the Samaritans, does not deserve stripes according to the law, but according to the constitutions of the wise men; but these, Christ and his disciples had no regard to.

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

She said, in a scoffing, jeering way:

How is it that thou, being a Jew] Which she might know, by his language and by his dress:

Askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?]

Not that the waters of Samaria were unlawful for a Jew to drink of; for as "The land of the Cuthites, (or Samaritans) was pure, or clean, so, תהיה "their collections of water," and their "habitations, and their ways were clean (a);" and might be used; but because the Jews used no familiarity with the Samaritans, nor would they receive any courtesy or kindness from them, as follows:

For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans] Some take these to be the words of the Evangelist, commenting upon, and explaining the words of the woman; but they seem rather to be her own words, giving a reason why she returned such an answer; and which must be understood, not in the strictest sense, as if they had no dealings at all with them: indeed in some things they had no dealings with them, and at some certain times; hence that discourse of the Samaritans with a Jewish Rabbi (b). "The Cuthites, (or Samaritans) inquired of R. Abhu, Your fathers, תאמרו לנו "used to deal with us," (or minister to us, or supply us with necessaries) wherefore do not ye deal with us? (or take a supply from us?) He replied unto them, Your Fathers did not corrupt their works, you have corrupted your works." They might not use their wine and vinegar, nor admit them to their tables. They say of a man (c), "Because the Cuthites, (or Samaritans) eat at his table, it was the reason why his children went into captivity:—and further add, That whoever invites a Cuthite, (or Samaritan) into his house, and ministers to him, is the cause of captivity to his children." And they forbid a man to enter into partnership with a Cuthite, (or Samaritan (d)); and particularly, "Three days before the feasts of idolaters (for such they reckoned the Samaritans, as well as others) it is forbidden to have any commerce with them, to borrow of them, or lend to them (e), &c." But then at other times, and in other respects, they had dealings with them; they might go into their cities and buy food of them, as the disciples did, y. 8. they might send their wheat to a Samaritan miller, to be ground (f); and, as it appears from the above citations, their houses and habitations were clean, and might be lodged in, with which compare Luke ix. 52. the poor of the Samaritans, were maintained with the poor of Israel (g): wherefore the sense is, as Doctor Lightfoot observes, that the Jews refused to receive the least favour or kindness at the hand of a Samaritan; and therefore the woman might justly wonder, that Christ should ask so small a favour of her, as a little water. The reason of this distance and aversion, was religion; and so the Ethiopic version, rather paraphrasing than translating, renders the words, "the Jews do not agree in religion, nor do they communicate with the Samaritans, nor mix together:" and this was of long standing, and had been occasioned and increased

(i) T. Hierof. Avoda Zara, fol. 44. 4.

Gittin, fol. 10. 1. & Cholin, fol. 4. 1. & Kiddushin, fol. 76. 1.

(u) Misna Demai, c. 7. §. 4. Vid. Bartenora in ibid.

(y) Misna Sheviith, c. 8. §. 10. Pirke Eliezer, c. 33.

(z) Maimonides & Bartenora in Misna ibid.

(a) T. Hierof. Avoda Zara, fol. 44. 4.

(b) T. Bab.

(b) Ibid.

(c) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 704. 1.

(d) T. Bab. Beroth, fol. 7. 2. Piske Tosephot ibid. art. 4. & in Megilla, art. 102.

(e) Misna Avoda Zara, c. 1. §. 1.

(f) Misna Demai, c. 3. §. 4.

(g) Piske Toseph. Yoma, art. 63.

treasured by various incidents. For when the ten tribes revolted in Jeroboam's time, the calves were set up in Dan and Bethel, in order to draw off the people from worship at Jerusalem, which gave great umbrage to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; and when the ten tribes were carried away captive by the king of Assyria, he planted the cities of Samaria with colonies in their room, consisting of heathenish and idolatrous persons, brought from Babylon, and other places; to whom he sent a priest, to instruct them in the manner of the God of the land; but with these instructions, they still retained their idols, and their idolatrous practices; see 2 Kings xvii. 24—41. which must render them odious to the Jews: and these were the principal adversaries of the Jews, after their return from captivity; and discouraged them, and weakened their hands, in the building of the second temple. But what latest, and most of all had fixed this aversion and enmity, was this; Manasseh, brother to Jaddua the high priest, having married Sanballat's daughter, governor of Samaria, was for it removed from the priesthood; who applying to his father-in-law, he proposed building for him a temple on mount Gerizzim, and making him an high priest; for which he obtained leave of Alexander the great; and accordingly built one, and made his son-in-law high priest; which drew a great many profligate Jews over to him, who mixing with the Samaritans, set up a worship, religion, and priesthood, in distinction from the Jews: and this was ever after, a matter of contention and quarrel between these people, and the reason why they would have no dealings with them.

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

[Jesus answered, &c.] In a very serious manner, in a different way from hers:

[If thou knewest the gift of God] Meaning, not the holy Spirit with his gifts and graces, as some think, but himself; for the following clause is explanatory of it:

[And who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink] And Christ is also spoken of in the Old Testament as the gift of God, Isa. ix. 6. and he had lately spoken of himself as such, chap. iii. 16. and he is, by way of eminency, the gift of God; which is comprehensive of all others, is exceeding large, and very suitable to the wants and cases of men; and is irrevocable, unchangeable, and unspeakable: for he is God's gift, as he is his own and only-begotten Son; and he is given for a covenant to the

people, with all the promises and blessings of it; and as an head, both of eminence and influence; and to be a Saviour of them, and a sacrifice for their sins; and as the bread of life, for them to feed and live upon; of which gift, men are naturally ignorant, as this woman was: they know not the dignity of his person; nor the nature and usefulness of his offices; nor the way of peace, righteousness and salvation by him; nor do they see any amiableness, or loveliness in him; and whatever notional knowledge some natural men may have of him, they know him not spiritually and experimentally, or as the gift of God to them:

[Thou wouldest have asked of him] A favour and benefit; for such who truly know Christ, the worth and value of him, and their need of him, will apply to him for grace, as they have encouragement to do; since all grace is treasured up in him, and he gives it freely, and upbraideth not; and souls are invited to ask it of him, and take it freely; nor is it to be had any where else: but knowledge of Christ, is absolutely necessary to asking any thing of him; for till he is known, he will not be applied to; but when he is made known to any, in his fulness and suitableness, they will have recourse to him, and ask grace and mercy of him; and which is freely had: the Vulgate Latin very wrongly adds, *perhaps*; reading it, "perhaps thou wouldest have asked;" whereas our Lord's meaning is, that she would certainly have asked:

[And he would have given thee living water] Pardoning and justifying grace, every branch of sanctifying grace, and all the supplies of it; so called because his grace quickens sinners dead in sin, and dead in law, and in their own apprehensions; and causes them to live in themselves, and before God; and because it refreshes and comforts, revives and cheers, and is like rivers of water in a dry land; and because it maintains and supports spiritual life in their souls; and it ever abides, and continues, and springs up unto everlasting life: for the allusion is to spring water, that bubbles up in a fountain, and is ever running; for such water, the Jews call *living water*; see Gen. xxvi. 10. where in the Hebrew text it is *living water*; which we, and also the Chaldee paraphrase, render *springing water*. So living waters with them, are said to be always flowing, and never cease (b).

11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

[Sir, &c.] Which was an usual way in those countries of addressing men, and especially strangers;

(b) Bartenora in Misn, Negaim, c. 14. §. 5.

gers; and expresses no uncommon respect to Christ of whose dignity and greatness she was entirely ignorant, and at whom she was now scoffing; for so the following words are to be understood:

Thou hast nothing to draw with] No pail, or bucket, or rope to let it down with, as Nonnus adds; for it seems, there was no bucket, or vessel, fastened at the well for common use, but every one brought one with them, when they came to draw; though it is strange there was not one; since, according to common usage, and even of the Jews (*i*), “A public well had, ^{but} a bucket, or pitcher;” but a private well had no bucket.”

And the well is deep] That which is now called Jacob’s well, is by some said to be forty cubits deep, and by others thirty-five yards:

From whence then hast thou that living water?] This she said in a sneering, scoffing manner: she reasoned with him, either that he must have it out of this well; but that could not be, since he had no vessel to draw with, and the well was so deep, that he could not come at the water without one; or he must have it from some neighbouring spring; upon which she scoffs at him in the following manner.

12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

Art thou greater, &c.] Art thou a person of greater worth and character than he, who was content to drink of this water; or wiser and more knowing than he, who could find out no better fountain of water in all these parts? She calls Jacob the father of them, according to the common notion and boasting of those people, when it served their turn; otherwise they were not the descendents of Jacob; for after the ten tribes were carried away captive by the king of Assyria, he placed in their room, in the cities of Samaria, men from Babylon, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim; heathenish and idolatrous people: see 2 Kings xvii. 24. And from these, the then Samaritans sprung; only upon Sanballat’s building a temple on mount Gerizzim, for Manasseh his son-in-law, when put away from the priesthood by the Jews for his marriage of his daughter, several wicked persons of the like sort came out of Judea, and joined themselves to the Samaritans: and such a mixed medley of people were they at this time, though they boasted of Jacob as their father, as this woman did; and so to this day, they draw their genealogy from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and particularly call Joseph their father; and say, From whence are we, but from

the tribe of Joseph the just, from Ephraim (*k*)? as they formerly did (*l*); “R. Meir saw a Samaritan, he said to him, From whence comest thou? (that is, from what family) he answered, From the (tribe) of Joseph.”

Which gave us the well] Jacob gave it indeed to Joseph and his posterity, along with the parcel of ground in which it was; see *v*. 5. but not to this mixed company:

And drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle] Which shews both the goodness and plenty of the water: though our Lord had spoke of living water, this woman understood him of no other, but spring water; called living water, from its motion, because it is continually springing up, bubbling, and ever running. So carnal persons, when they hear of spiritual things under earthly metaphors, think of nothing but carnal things; as Nicodemus, when Christ talked of being born again; and the Jews at Capernaum, when he discoursed concerning eating his flesh, and drinking his blood; for spiritual things are neither known nor received by the natural man.

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

Jesus answered, &c.] In a mild and gentle manner, patiently bearing all her scoffs and flouts, and continuing to instruct and inform her concerning this living water, shewing the preferableness of it to others:

Whosoever drinketh of this water] Meaning in that well called Jacob’s well, or any other common water,

Shall thirst again] As this woman had often done, and would again, as she herself knew, *v*. 15. and as Jesus did, who very likely afterwards drank of it, John xix. 28. For though water allays heat, quenches thirst, and refreshes and revives the spirits for a while, yet, in process of time, natural heat increases, and thirst returns, and there is a necessity of drinking water again.

14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

But whosoever, &c.] Meaning, the Spirit and his grace; see chapter vii. 38, 39. and which he more than once speaks of, as his gift here, and in the context: of which, whoever truly partakes,

Shall

(i) T. Hieron. Erubin, fol. 20, 2. So Servius in Virgil, *Æneid* 2, v. 715.

(k) Epist. Samar. ad Scaliger. in *Antiqu. Eccl. Oriental.* p. 123, 124, 126.

(l) Bereshit Rabba, §. 94. fol. 82, 1.

Shall never thirst] Either after sinful lusts and pleasures, and his former vicious way of living, which he now disrelishes: not but there are desires and lustings after carnal things in regenerate persons, as there were lustings in the Israelites after the onions, garlic, and flesh-pots in Egypt, when they were come out from thence; yet these are not so strong, prevalent, and predominant; they are checked and restrained by the grace of God; so that they do not hanker after sin as they did, nor drink up iniquity like water, or commit sin with greediness, as before: or else it means thirsting after the grace of God; thirsty persons are invited to *take and drink of the water of life freely*, and are pronounced blessed; and it is promised, that they shall be filled or satisfied; yet not so in this life, that they shall never thirst after, or desire more; for as they need more grace, and it is promised them, they thirst after it, and desire it; and the more they taste and partake of it, the more they desire it: but the sense is, either as some read the words, "they shall not thirst for ever;" though they may for a time, and be in a distressed condition for want of a supply of it, yet they shall not always; God will open rivers and fountains for them, and give drink to his people, his chosen; and in the other state, they shall hunger and thirst no more; for the Lamb shall lead them to fountains of living waters: or rather, they shall never thirst, so as to be like the thirsty and parched earth, dried up, and have no moisture in them; for however this may seem sometimes to be their case, God will, and does, pour out water and floods upon them; yea, that grace which is infused into their souls, is an abundant and an abiding principle, which will preserve them from languishing, so as to perish:

But the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water] Which denotes the plenty of it; for the grace of God, given at conversion, is exceeding abundant; it superabounds all the aboundings of sin; it comes in large flows into the hearts of regenerate persons, and flows out of them, as rivers of living water: and which also abides, for it continues *springing up into everlasting life*; it is a seed which remains, an immortal and never-dying principle; it is inseparably connected with eternal life; it is the beginning of it, and it issues in it; whoever has grace, shall have glory; and whoever are called, sanctified, justified, and pardoned, shall be glorified: such is the nature, influence, and use of this living water, in Christ's gift: the words of the law are, in the Targum on Cant. iv. 15. compared to a well of living water.

15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

The woman saith, &c.] See the note on J. 11.

Give me this water, that I thirst not] The Syriac and Perfic versions add, "again:"

Neither come hither to draw] The Ethiopic version adds here, "again." This she said also, in the same sneering and scoffing way, as her talking of not thirsting and coming thither to draw water, shews; and it is as if she had said, "Pray give me some of this fine water you talk of, that I may never thirst again; and so have no occasion to be at all this fatigue and trouble, to come daily to this well for water:" though some think, that she now spoke seriously, having some little knowledge of what our Lord meant by *living water*, but with a mixture of much ignorance, and that she heartily desired it; but the reason she gives, shews the contrary.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.

Jesus saith, &c.] Observing that she continued an ignorant scoffer at him and his words, determined to take another method with her; and convince her, that he was not a common and ordinary person she was conversing with, as she took him to be; and that also he knew what a sinner she was, and what a vicious course of life she had lived; so that she might see that she stood in need of him, as the gift of God, and Saviour of men; and of the grace he had been speaking of, under the notion of living water: saying to her,

Go, call thy husband, and come hither] Go directly from hence to the city of Sychar, and call thy husband, and come back hither along with him again: this Christ said, not to have him come to him to teach and instruct him, and as if he would more readily and easily understand him, and that he might be, with her, a partaker of the same grace; but to bring on some farther conversation, by which she would understand that he knew her state and condition, and what a course of life she now lived, and so bring her under a conviction of her sin and danger, and need of him and his grace.

17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:

The woman, &c.] Which was a truth she would not have spoke at another time and place, or to any of her neighbours; but Christ being a stranger, and no odium incurring upon her by it; and this serving a purpose to excuse her going to call him, she declares the truth of the matter:

Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband] This is the truth, it is really fact, and is the true state of the case, between thee and him who goes for thy husband.

18 For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.

She either had had five husbands lawfully, and had buried one after another; and which was no crime, and might be. The Sadducees proposed a case to Christ, in which a woman is said to have had seven husband successively, in a lawful manner, *Matt. xxii. 25—28.* Or rather, she had had so many, and had been divorced from every one of them for adultery; for no other cause, it should seem, did the Samaritans divorce; seeing that they only received the law of Moses, and rejected, at least many of, the traditions of the elders; and since they are particularly said (*m*), “Not to be expert in “the law of marriages and divorces.” And the rather this may seem to be the case, as Dr Lightfoot observes; since these husbands are mentioned, as well as he with whom she lived in an adulterous manner; and which suggests, that she had not lived honestly with them:

And he whom thou now hast is not thy husband] That is, “not thy lawful husband,” as the Persian version reads, and Nonnus paraphrases; being not married to him at all, though they cohabited as man and wife, when there was no such relation between them:

In that saidst thou truly] Or that which is truth: thus Christ, the omniscient God, who knew her full well, and the whole of her past infamous conversation, and her present lewd and wicked way of living, exposes all unto her.

19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

The woman saith, &c.] With another countenance, and a different air and gesture; with another accent and tone of speech, dropping her scoffs and jeers:

I perceive that thou art a prophet] Such an one as Samuel was, who could tell Saul what was in his heart, and that his fathers asses were found, and where they were, *1 Sam. ix. 19, 20.* and as Elisha, whose heart went with his servant Gehazi, when Naaman turned to him to meet him, and give him presents; and who could tell, ere the king's messenger came to him, that the son of a murderer had sent to take away his head, *2 Kings v. 26.* and chap. vi. 32. And such a prophet, that had such a spirit of discerning, this woman took Christ to be; and who indeed is greater than a prophet, and is the omniscient God; who knows all mens hearts, thoughts, words, and actions, and needs not that any should testify of them to him; for he knows what

is in them, and done by them; and can tell them all that ever they did, as he did this woman, *Y. 29.* Now in order either to shift off the discourse from this subject, which touched her to the quick; or else being truly sensible of her sin, and willing to reform, and for the future to worship God in the place and manner he had directed, she addressed Christ in the following words.

20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

Our fathers, &c.] In mount Gerizzim, which was just by, and within sight; so that the woman could point to it; it was so near to Shechem, or Sychar, that Jotham's voice was heard from the top of it thither, *Judges ix. 6, 7.* By the *fathers*, this woman claims as theirs, are meant, not the immediate ancestors of the Samaritans, or those only of some few generations past; but the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whose descendents they would be thought to be; and they improved every instance of their worshipping in these parts, in favour of this mountain, being a sacred place. And Abraham did indeed build an altar to the Lord, in the plain of Moreh, *Gen. xii. 6, 7.* and which the Jews themselves (*n*) own, is the same with Sichem; but their tradition, which Theophylact reports, that Isaac was offered upon the mount of Gerizzim, is entirely false: Jacob it is true, came to Shalem, a city of Shechem; and upon this very spot of ground, the parcel of a field he bought of the children of Hamor, and gave to his son Joseph: he built an altar, and called it *El-elobe Israel*, *Gen. xxxiii. 18—20.* And also upon this very mountain, the tribe of Joseph, with others, stood, when they were come over Jordan, and blessed the people; all which circumstances, the Samaritans failed not to make use of in vindication of themselves, and their worship in this mountain; and which this woman might be acquainted with, and might refer unto: but as for any temple, or place of worship on this mount, there was none till of late years, even after the second temple was built: The occasion of it, as Josephus relates (*o*), was this; Manasseh, brother to Jaddua the high-priest, having married Nicasso, daughter of Sanballat, governor of Samaria, was on that account driven from the priesthood; he fled to his father-in-law, and related the case to him, expressing great love to his daughter, and yet a regard to his office; upon which Sanballat proposed to build him a temple on mount Gerizzim, for which he did not doubt of obtaining leave

of

(*) T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 76. 1.

(*) Misna Sota, c. 7. §. 5. T. Bab. Sota, fol. 33. 2.
(o) Antiqu. l. 12. c. 2. Vid. Juchasin, fol. 14. 2.

of Darius the Persian monarch, and to make him an high-priest. Darius being overcome by Alexander the great, Sanballat made his court to him, and petitioned him for the building of this temple, who granted him his request. And accordingly he built one, and Manasseh became the high priest; and many of the profligate Jews, that had married strange wives, or violated the sabbath, or had eat forbidden meat, came over and joined him. This temple we are told (p), was built about forty years after the second temple at Jerusalem; and stood two hundred years, and then was destroyed by Jochanan, the son of Simeon, the son of Mattathiah, who was called Hyrcanus, and so says Josephus (q). It might now be rebuilt: however, this did not put a stop to worship in this place, about which there were great contentions, between the Jews and the Samaritans; of which we have some instances, in the writings of the former: it is said (r), that "R. Jonathan went to pray in Jerusalem, and passed by that mountain (the gloss says, mount Gerizzim) and a certain Samaritan saw him, and said to him, Whither art thou going? He replied, that he was going to pray at Jerusalem. He said to him, Is it not better for thee to pray in this blessed mountain, and not in that dunghill house? He replied, Why is it blessed? He answered, Because it was not overflowed by the waters of the flood. The thing was hid from the eyes of R. Jonathan, and he could not return an answer." This story is told elsewhere (s), with a little variation, and more plainly as to the place, thus; "It happened to R. Jonathan, that he went to Neapolis of the Cuthites, or Samaritans, that is, to Sichem, for Sichem is now called Naplous) and he was riding upon an ass, and an herdsman with him; a certain Samaritan joined himself to them: when they came to mount Gerizzim, the Samaritan said to R. Jonathan, How came it to pass that we are come to this holy mountain? R. Jonathan replied, Whence comes it to be holy? The Samaritan answered him, Because it was not hurt by the waters of the flood." Much the same story is told of R. Ishmael bar R. Jose (t). It is to be observed in this account, that the Samaritans call this mountain the *holy* mountain, they imagined there was something sacred in it; and the *blessed* mountain, or the mountain of blessing; no doubt, because the blessings were pronounced upon it; though a very poor reason is given by them in the above passages. And they not only urged the above instances of the worship of the patriarchs at, or about this place,

which this woman refers to; but even falsified a passage in the Pentateuch, as is generally thought, in favour of this mount; for in *Deut. xxvii. 4.* instead of mount Ebal, in the Samaritan Pentateuch mount Gerizzim is inserted. So stood the case on one side of the question; on the other hand, the Jews pleaded for the temple at Jerusalem. And,

Ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship] That is, in the temple there; who urged, and very rightly, that God had chosen that place to put his name, and fix his worship there; and had ordered them to come thither, and bring their offerings and sacrifices, and to keep their passover and other feasts; see *Deut. xii. 5, 6.* and chap. *xvi. 2.* *2 Chron. ix. 12.* This was built by Solomon, according to the command and direction of God, some hundreds of years before mount Gerizzim was made use of for religious worship; and they had not only these things to plead, but also the worship which was here given to God in this place before the temple was built upon it, which they failed not to do. So the Targumist on *2 Chron. iii. 1.* enlarges on this head; "And Solomon began to build the sanctuary of the Lord in Jerusalem, on mount Moriah, in the place where Abraham worshipped and prayed in the name of the Lord: וְהָיָה שְׁמֵי ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ הָיָה בְּמָקוֹם הַזֶּה לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד" this place is the land of worship; for there all generations worshipped before the Lord; and there Abraham offered up his son Isaac for a burnt-offering, and the Word of the Lord delivered him, and a ram was appointed in his stead: there Jacob prayed when he fled from Esau his brother; there the angel of the Lord appeared to David, when he disposed the sacrifice in the place he bought of Ornan, in the floor of Ornan the Jebusite." And since, now there were so many things to be said on each side of the question, this woman desires, that seeing Christ was a prophet, he would be pleased to give her his sense of the matter, and inform her which was the right place of worship.

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

Believe me in what I am now going to say, since you own me to be a prophet:

The hour cometh] The time is at hand; it is very near; it is just coming:

When ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father] That is, God, whom the Jews, and so the Samaritans, knew under the character of the Father of all men, as the creator and

(p) Juchasin, fol. 14. 2. & 15. 1.

(q) Antiqu. l. 13. c. 17.

(r) Bereshit Rabba, §. 32. fol. 27. 4. & Shirhashirim Rabba,

fol. 16. 3.

(s) D. berim Rabba, §. 3. fol. 238. 2.

(t) Bereshit Rabba, §. 82. fol. 71. 1.

and preserver of them; for not God as the Father of Christ, or of the saints by adopting grace, is here intended, which this ignorant woman at least had no knowledge of: and the reason of our Lord's speaking after this manner, signifying, that she need not trouble herself about the place of worship, was, partly, because in a little time Jerusalem, and the temple in it, would be destroyed, and *not one stone left upon another*; and that Samaria, and this mountain of Gerizzim, with whatsoever edifice might be upon it, would be laid desolate, so that neither of them would continue long to be places of religious worship; and partly, because all distinction of places in religion would entirely cease; and one place would be as lawful, and as proper to worship in, as another; and men should lift up holy hands, and pray, and offer up spiritual sacrifices in every place, even *from the rising of the sun, to the going down of the same*, Mal. i. 11.

22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.

Ye worship, &c.] However, as to her question, he more directly replies by condemning the Samaritans, and their ignorance in worship, and by approving the Jews; and so manifestly gives the preference to the Jews, not only with respect to the place, and object of worship, but with respect to knowledge and salvation. As for the Samaritans, he suggests, that they were ignorant, not only of the true object of worship, but knew not what they themselves worshipped; or, at least, were not agreed in it. The original inhabitants of those parts, from whence these Samaritans sprung, were idolatrous heathens, placed by the king of Assyria in the room of the ten tribes he carried away captive; and these feared not the Lord, for they *knew not the manner of the God of the land*: wherefore lions were sent among them, which slew many of them; upon which the king of Assyria ordered a priest to be sent to instruct them: but notwithstanding this, they had every one gods of their own, some one, and some another; and so served divers graven images, they and their children, and their childrens children, to the time of the writer of the book of Kings; see 2 Kings xvii. 24—41. And though after Manasseh, and other Jews were come among them, and they had received the law of Moses, they might have some knowledge of the true God, yet they glorified him not as God; and though they might in words profess him, yet in works they denied him: and even after this they are very highly charged by the Jews with idolatrous practices on this mount. Sometimes they say (u) the Cuthites, or Samaritans, wor-

shipped fire; and at other times, and which chiefly prevails with them, they assert (x), that their wife men, upon searching, found that they worshipped the image of a dove on mount Gerizzim; and sometimes they say (y), they worshipped the idols, the strange gods, or Teraphim, which Jacob hid under the oak in Sichem; which last, if true, may serve to illustrate these words of Christ, that they worshipped *they knew not what*, since they worshipped idols hid in the mount. "R. Ishmael bar Jose, they say (z), went to Neapolis, (Sichem, called Naplous) the Cuthites, or Samaritans came to him, (to persuade him to worship with them in their mountain;) He said unto them, I will shew you that ye do not worship at this mountain, but the images which are hid under it; for it is written, Gen. xxxv. 4. and *Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem.*" And elsewhere (a) it is reported of the same Rabbi, that he went to Jerusalem to pray, as before related on y. 20. and after what passed between him, and the Samaritan he met with at mount Gerizzim, before mentioned, he added; "And said to him, I will tell you what ye are like, (ye are like) to a dog that lustr after carrion; so because ye know the idols are hid under it, (the mountain) as it is written, Gen. xxxv. 4. and *Jacob hid them*, therefore ye lust after it. They said, This man knows that idols are hid here, and perhaps he will take them away; and they consulted together to kill him. He arose, and made his escape in the night." But this was not the case of the Jews:

We know what we worship] Christ puts himself among them, for he was a Jew, as the woman took him to be; and, as man, was a worshipper of God: he feared, loved, and obeyed God; he trusted in him, and prayed unto him; though, as God, he was the object of worship himself: and the true worshippers among the Jews, of which sort Christ was, knew God, whom they worshipped, spiritually and savingly; and the generality of that people had right notions of the God of Israel, having the oracles, and service of God; and being instructed out of Moses and the prophets:

For salvation is of the Jews] The promises of salvation, and of a Saviour, were made to them, when the Gentiles were strangers to them; the means of salvation, and of the knowledge of it, as the word, statutes, and ordinances, were enjoyed by them, when others were ignorant of them; and the Messiah, who is sometimes styled *salvation*, see Gen.

(x) Maimon, in *Mish. Berachot*, c. 8. §. 3, & *Bartenora* in *ibid.*, c. 7. §. 1. & in *Nidda*, c. 4. §. 1.

(y) *Shalsheter Hakkabala*, fol. 15. 2.

(z) *T. Hieros. Avoth Zara*, fol. 44. 4.

(a) *Berechit Rabba*, §. 31. fol. 71. 1.

(u) *T. Bab. Taanith*, fol. 5. 2.

Gen. xlix. 18. Psalm xiv. 7. Luke ii. 30. was not only prophesied of in their books, and promised unto them, but came of them, as well as to them; and the number of the saved ones had been for many hundreds of years, and still was among them; the line of election ran among them, and few among the Gentiles were called and saved, as yet.

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

[*But the hour cometh, &c.*] The true worshippers of the true God, and who worship in a right manner, whether Jews or Samaritans, or of whatsoever nation,

[*Shall worship the Father*] The one true God, the Father of spirits and of all flesh living:

[*In Spirit*] In opposition to all carnal conceptions of him, as if he was a corporeal being, or circumscribed in some certain place, dwelling in temples made with hands, or was to be worshipped with mens hands; and in distinction from the carnal worship of the Jews, which lay greatly in the observation of carnal ordinances: and this shews, they should not worship with their bodies only, for *bodily exercise profiteth little*; but with their souls or spirits, with their whole hearts engaged therein; and by, and under the influence and assistance of the Spirit of God, without whom men cannot perform worship, neither prayer, praise, preaching, or hearing, aright:

[*And in truth*] In opposition to hypocrisy; with true hearts, in the singleness, sincerity, and integrity of their souls; and in distinction from Jewish ceremonies, which were only shadows, and had not the truth and substance of things in them; and according to the word of truth, the Gospel of salvation; and in Christ, who is the truth, the true tabernacle, in, and through whom access is had to God, prayer is made to him, and every part of religious worship with acceptance: so Enoch is said, *אֵלֹהִים בָּרָא* "to worship in truth," before the Lord; in the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, in *Gen. v. 24*. And it may be that the worship of all the three persons in the Godhead, as more distinctly performed under the Gospel-dispensation, is here intended: for the words may be thus read, *shall worship the Father, with the Spirit, and with the truth*; so the preposition *in* is rendered in *Ephesians vi. 2.* and elsewhere; and then the sense is, they shall worship the Father; the first person in the Trinity, who is the Father of Christ, his only-begotten Son, and together and equally with him *the Spirit*; the holy Spirit, as the Ethiopic version reads; and Nonnus calls

it the divine Spirit: and the rather he may be thought to be intended, since it follows in the next verse, *the Spirit is God*; for so the words lie in the Greek text; and are so rendered in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions; and therefore is the proper object of religious worship; whose temples the saints are, with whom they have communion, to whom they pray, and in whose name they are baptized: and also together with the truth; with Christ, *the way, the truth, and the life*; who is *the true God, and eternal life*; and who is equally to be worshipped as the Father and Spirit, as he is by the angels in heaven, and by the saints on earth; who pray unto him, trust in him, and are also baptized in his name, as in the name of the other two persons: and the rather this may be thought to be the sense, since Christ is speaking, not of the manner, but of the object of worship, in the preceding verse:

[*For the Father seeketh such to worship him*] It being agreeable to him to be worshipped in the manner as above related; and his desire is, that the Son and Spirit should be honoured equally as himself; and such worshippers he has found, having made them such, both among the Jews and Gentiles; and such only are acceptable to him; see *Phil. iii. 3.*

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

[*Or the Spirit is God*; a divine person, possessed of all divine perfections, as appears from his names, works, and worship, ascribed unto him; see the note on the preceding verse; though the Arabic and Persic versions, and others, read as we do, *God is a Spirit*; that is, God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: for taking the words in this light, not one of the persons is to be understood exclusive of the other; for this description, or definition, agrees with each of them, and they are all the object of worship, and to be worshipped in a true and spiritual manner. *God is a Spirit*, and not a body or a corporeal substance: the nature and essence of God is like a Spirit, simple and uncompounded, not made up of parts; nor is it divisible; nor does it admit of any change and alteration. God, as a Spirit, is immaterial, immortal, invisible, and an intelligent, willing, and active being; but differs from other spirits, in that he is an uncreated one, an immense and infinite Spirit, and an eternal one, which has neither beginning nor end: he is therefore a Spirit by way of eminency, as well as effectively, he being the author and former of all spirits: whatever excellence is in them, must be ascribed to God in the highest manner; and whatever is imperfect in them, must be removed from him:

And

And they that worship him] Worship is due to him on account of his nature and perfections, both internal and external; with both the bodies and souls of men; and both private and public; in the closet, in the family, and in the church of God; as prayer, praise, attendance on the word and ordinances:

Must worship him in Spirit and in truth] In the true and spiritual manner before described, which is suitable to his nature, and agreeable to his will.

25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

The woman not knowing well what to say to these things Christ had been discoursing about, as the place, object, and manner of worship; and being indetermin'd in her judgment of them, by what he had said, was willing to refer them to the Messias's coming; of which she and the Samaritans had some knowledge; said,

I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ] The last clause, *which is called Christ*, are not the words of the woman explaining the Hebrew word *Messiah*; for as, on the one hand, she did not understand Greek, so, on the other, she could not think that the person she was conversing with, who she knew was a Jew, needed that word to be explained to him; but they are the words of the Evangelist, interpreting the Hebrew word *Messiah*, by the Greek word *Christ*, in which language he wrote: hence this clause is left out in the Syriac version, as unnecessary to a Syriac reader, not needing the word to be explained to him. The Arabic and Ethiopic versions, and some copies, read in the plural number, "we know that Messias cometh;" the knowledge of the coming of the Messias was not peculiar to this woman, but was common to all the Samaritans; for as they received the five books of Moses, they might learn from thence, that a divine and excellent person was to come, who is called *the seed of the woman, that should bruise the serpent's head; Shiloh, to whom the gathering of the people should be; and a prophet like unto Moses*: and though the word *Messiah* is not found in those books, yet, as it was usual with the Jews to call the same person by this name, they might easily take it from them, and make use of it; and they not only knew that there was a Messias to come, and expected him, but that he was coming, just ready to come; and this they might conclude, not only from the general expectation of the Jewish nation about this time, but from *Genesis* xlix. 10. And it is certain, that the Samaritans to this day do expect a Messias, though

they know not his name, unless it be *משיח* the meaning of which they do not understand (*b*): to me it seems to be an abbreviation of *משיח המלך* or *משיח אשר הוא* "he that is to come;" by which circumlocution the Jews understand the Messias; see *Matt.* xi. 3. and to which this Samaritan woman seems to have some respect:

When he is come, he will tell us all things] The whole mind and will of God; all things relating to the worship of God, and to the salvation of men. This the Samaritans might conclude from his general character, as a prophet like unto Moses, to whom men were to hearken, *Deut.* xviii. 15. and from a common prevailing notion among the Jews, that the times of the Messias would be times of great knowledge, founded on several prophecies, as *Isaiah* ii. 3. and chap. xi. 2, 9. *Jer.* xxxi. 34. and which they sometimes express in the following manner (*c*): "In the days of the Messias, even the little children in the world shall find out the hidden things of wisdom, and know in the ends and computations (of times,) and at that time he shall be made manifest unto all." And again (*d*), "Says R. Judah, the holy, blessed God will reveal the deep mysteries of the law in the times of the King Messias; for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, &c." And it is written, *They shall not teach every man his brother, &c.*" And elsewhere (*e*), "The whole world shall be filled with the words of the Messias, and with the words of the law, and with the words of the commandments." Accordingly, the Messias is come, who lay in the bosom of the Father, and has made known all things to his disciples, he hath heard of him; he has declared him to them, his love, grace, and mercy. God has spoken all he has to say that appertains to his own worship, and the salvation of the children of men by his Son Jesus Christ.

26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

Jesus saith, &c.] Upon her making mention of the Messias, of his coming, and of his work, he took the opportunity of making himself known unto her:

I that speak unto thee am he] The Messias; see *Isaiah* lii. 6. This is a wonderful instance of the grace of Christ to this woman, that he should make himself known in so clear and plain a manner to so mean a person, and so infamous a creature as she had been: we never find that he ever made so clear a discovery of himself, in such express terms, to any, as to her, unless it were to his immediate disciples;

(b) Epist. Samar. ad Scaliger. in Antiq. Eccl. Oriental. p. 124.

(c) Zohar in Gen. fol. 74. 1.

(d) Ibid. in Lev. x. 1.

(e) Maimonides Hilchot Melachim, c. 11. §. 4. & 12. 5.

disciples; and these he would sometimes charge not to tell who he was.

27 ¶ And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?

Just as he was saying the above words, and making himself known in this full manner, his disciples, who had been into the city to buy food, came up to them:

And marvelled that he talked with the woman] Or with a woman; for, according to the Jewish canons, it was not judged decent, right, and proper, nor indeed lawful, to enter into a conversation, or hold any long discourse with a woman. Their rule is this, "Do not multiply discourse with a woman; with his wife, they say; much less with his neighbour's wife: hence the wife men say, At whatsoever time a man multiplies discourse with a woman, he is the cause of evil to himself, and ceases from the words of the law, and at last shall go down into hell (f)." And especially this was thought to be very unseemly in any public place, as in an inn, or in the street: hence that direction (g), "Let not a man talk with a woman in the streets, even with his wife; and there is no need to say, with another man's wife." And particularly it was thought very unbecoming a religious man, a doctor, or scholar, or a disciple of a wise man, so to do. This is one of the six things which are a reproach to a scholar, "to talk with a woman in the street (h)." And it is even said (i), "Let him not talk with a woman in the street, though she is his wife, or his sister, or his daughter." And besides, the disciples might marvel, not only that he talked with a woman, but that he should talk with that woman, who was a Samaritan; since the Jews had no familiar conversation with Samaritans, men or women: and the woman was as much astonished that Christ should have any thing to say to her, and especially to ask a favour of her; for though they might, and did converse in a way of trade and business, yet did they not multiply discourse, or enter into a free conversation with one another: and it may be, that the disciples might over-hear what he said to the woman, just as they came up; so that their astonishment was not merely at his talking with a woman, and with a Samaritan woman, but at what he said unto her, that he should so plainly tell her that he was the Messiah, when he so strictly charged them to tell no man.

(f) Pirke Abot, c. 1. §. 5. Abot R. Nathan, c. 7. fol. 3. 3. & Derech Eretz, fol. 27. 3. (g) Bemidbar Rabba, §. 10. fol. 200. 2. (h) T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 43. 2.

(i) Maimonides Hilchot, Dayot, c. 3. §. 7.

Yet no man said] No, not Peter, as Nonnus observes, who was bold and forward to put and ask questions:

What seekest thou?] Or inquirest of her about? Is it food, or drink, or what?

Or, Why talkest thou with her?] When it is not customary, seemly, and lawful. It may be considered, whether or no these two questions may not relate, separately, the one to the woman, the other to Christ; as, the first, *What seekest thou?* to the woman; and the sense be, that no man said to her, What do you want with our master? What are you inquiring about of him? What would you have of him? Or what do you seek for from him? and the latter, *Why talkest thou with her?* peculiarly to Christ. The Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, and Beza's ancient copy indeed read, "no man said to him;" which confines both the questions to Christ. Now this shews the reverence the disciples had for Christ, and the great opinion they entertained of him, that whatever he did was well, and wisely done; though it might seem strange to them, and they could not account for it: however, they did not think that he, who was their Lord and Master, was accountable to them for what he did; and they doubted not but he had good reasons for his conduct.

28 The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,

She then left her pail or pot that she brought with her to the well to draw water in, for either Christ or his disciples to make use of; or rather, through haste and forgetfulness, her mind being greatly impressed, and her thoughts much taken up with what Christ had said to her, and ran to acquaint others with it. So the disciples left their nets, their business, their friends, and all for Christ; and so the saints are brought to quit their earthly and worldly things for the sake of Christ and his Gospel. The Ethiopic version renders it, "she left her disputation;" she left off discoursing with Christ upon the disciples coming to him.

And went her way into the city] The city of Sychar, to inform her friends, relations, and neighbours what she had met with. So Andrew and Philip, when they had found Christ themselves, acquaint others with it, and bring them to him: so Levi, the publican, being called himself by Christ, makes a feast for Christ, and invites many publicans and sinners to sit down with him, that they might know him as well as himself: so the Apostle Paul, when converted, expresses a great concern for his brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh; and such is the nature of true grace, that those that have it, would have others partakers of it likewise.

And

And saith to the men] The Ethiopic version adds, "of her house;" no doubt the men of the place in general are meant; not only those of her family, but the inhabitants of the city. The Syriac version leaves out the words, "to the men." The Jews will not allow the Cuthites, or Samaritans, to be called *men*; this they peculiarly ascribe to priests, Levites, and Israelites (*k*).

29 Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

Come and see an uncommon, an extraordinary man, a prophet, and, who himself says, he is the Messiah, who is now at Jacob's well; come, go along with me, and see him, and converse with him, and judge for yourselves, who, and what he is: she does not say, "go and see;" for she proposed to go along with them herself, that she might have more conversation with him, and knowledge of him, and grace from him: so such that have tasted that the Lord is gracious, desire more grace from him, and communion with him.

Which told me all things that ever I did] The more remarkable things that had been done by her in the whole series of her life and conversation; referring more especially to the account he had given her of her having had five husbands, and what the man was she now lived with; when, no doubt, all the transactions of her life were laid before her, and she had, at once, a view of all her iniquities; when her sins stared her in the face, and her conscience was filled with guilt and remorse, and her soul with shame and confusion; and so it is, when Christ, by his Spirit, convinces of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment:

Is not this the Christ?] That was to come, has been promised and prophesied of, and we have expected, who is of quick understanding, and even God omniscient; surely this must be he, as he himself says he is.

30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

"The men," as the Syriac version expresses it, the inhabitants of Sychar left their business, and came out of the city:

And came unto him] To Christ, to see him, and converse with him, that they might know who he was: for though the woman had been a woman of ill fame, yet such was the account that she gave of Christ, and such power went along with her words; that what with the strangeness of the relation, and the curiosity with which they were led, and chiefly through the efficacy of divine grace, at least in many of them, they were moved to regard

what she said, and to follow her directions and solicitations.

31 ¶ In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

Whilst the woman was gone into the city, and had acquainted the inhabitants, that such a wonderful person was at Jacob's well, and invited them to come and see him,

His disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat] For they perceived a disinclination in him to food; and they knew that he was weary with his journey, and that it was the time of day, and high time, that he had had some food; and therefore out of great respect to him, and in concern for his health and welfare, they intreated him, that he would take some food: so far was Christ from indulging his sensual appetite; and so little reason had the scribes and Pharisees to traduce him as a winebibber and glutton.

32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

But he said, &c.] That is, "Jesus," as the Perfic, or, "the Lord Jesus," as the Ethiopic versions express it:

I have meat to eat that ye know not of] Meaning the conversion of the Samaritan woman, and of other Samaritans, who were flocking in great numbers to him, which he knew, though his disciples did not; and the harvest of souls he had a prospect of, see *y*. 35. was as meat unto him, delightful and refreshing; and his mind and thoughts were so taken up with these things, that he had no inclination to any corporal food.

33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat?

They said privately, among themselves, though in his hearing; at least he knew what they said by his answer:

Hath any man] Or any one, any angel from heaven, or any of the inhabitants of the city, or any man or woman, or this woman, they had found him talking with:

Brought him ought to eat?] For they thought of nothing else but bodily food; just as when he cautioned them against the leaven of the Sadducees and Pharisees, they imagined he said it, because they had taken no bread; whereas he meant the doctrine of these persons: so dull of understanding in spiritual things were the disciples themselves, that it is not so much to be wondered at, that the Samaritan woman, whilst in her carnal state, when Christ spoke of living water, should understand him of material water, or spring water.

(y) T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 61. 1 & Tosephot in ibid.

34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

[Jesus saith, &c.] To his disciples:

My meat is to do the will of him that sent me] The Ethiopic version reads, "of my Father that sent me;" and who is undoubtedly intended. Now as food is pleasant, and delightful, and refreshing to the body of man, so doing the will of God was as delightful and refreshing to the soul of Christ: he took as much pleasure in it, as an hungry man does in eating and drinking. One part of the will of God was to assume human nature; this he had done, and with delight and pleasure: another part of it was to fulfil the law; and this was in his heart, and was his delight, and he was now doing it: and an other branch of it was to suffer and die in the room and stead of his people: and as disagreeable as this was in itself to the human nature, yet he cheerfully agreed to it; and was sometimes, as it were, impatient till it was accomplished; and he voluntarily became obedient to it: no man could with greater eagerness fall to eating, when hungry, than Christ went about his Father's will and work, even that which was most ungrateful to him, as man.

And to finish his work] One part of which was to preach the Gospel, and for which he was anointed and sent; and which he did with great assiduity and constancy: and another part of it was the conversion of sinners by it, whom he was sent to call, and with whom he delighted to be; and was the work he was now about, and took great pleasure in, as the text expresses: and beside these, miracles were works his Father gave him to finish; such as healing diseases, and dispossessing of devils; and which he went about doing continually, with great delight; but the chief work of all is, that of the redemption and salvation of his chosen ones: this was a work his Father called him to, and sent him into this world to perform, which he gave unto him, and Christ accepted of, and agreed to do; and though it was a very toilsome and laborious one, there being a righteous law to be fulfilled, justice to be satisfied, the sins of all his people to bear, as well as the wrath of God, and the curse of the law, and numerous enemies to grapple with, and an accursed death to undergo; yet with pleasure he performed this: for the joy of doing his Father's will, accomplishing his counsels and covenant, and his own engagements, and procuring the salvation of his people, he endured the cross patiently, and despised the shame of it. The whole of the will and work of God was done by him, just as the Lord commanded it; exactly, according to the pattern given him, with all faithfulness

and integrity; with the most consummate wisdom and prudence; with all application, diligence, and constancy, and so as to finish it, and that without the help of any other; and in such a manner that nothing can be added to it to make it more perfect, or that it can be undone again by men or devils: and that the doing and finishing of this were his meat, or as delightful and refreshing to him as meat is to the body, appears from his ready and cheerful engaging in it in eternity; from his early and industrious entrance on it in time; from his constancy in it when he had begun, inasmuch that nothing could deter him from it; nor did he sink and fail under it, nor lest it till he had finished it.

35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

[Say not ye, &c.] Our Lord had been in Jerusalem and Judea about eight months from the last passover, and there remained four more to the next passover:

And then cometh harvest?] Barley-harvest, which began at that time. Now as the passover was in the middle of the month Nisan, which was about the latter end of our March; reckoning four months back from thence shews, that it was about the latter end of our November, or beginning of December, that Christ was in Samaria, and at Jacob's well. Some think, that this does not refer to the then present time, as if there were so many months from thence to the next harvest; but to a common way of speaking, that there were four months from seed-time to harvest; during which time there was a comfortable hope, and longing expectation of it: but this will, by no means, agree either with the wheat or barley harvest. The wheat was sown before this time, and the barley a good while after. "Half Tifri, Marcheshvan, and half Cisleu, were, *וְהָיָה זֶרַע זֶמַן* "seed's time (1)." The earliest they sowed their wheat was in Tifri, which answers to our September and October; that is, to half one, and half the other. The month of Marcheshvan, which answers to October and November, was the principal month for sowing it (2): hence that paraphrase on *Ezek. xi. 2*. "Give a good part of thy seed to thy field in Tifri, and do not refrain from sowing even in Cisleu." As for the barley, that was sown in the months of Shebet and Adar, and usually in the latter (3); the former of which answers to January and February,

(1) T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 106. 2. (2) Gloss. in T. Bab. Rosh Hashana, fol. 16. 1. (3) Gloss. in Bava Metzia & in Rosh Hashana ibid.

and the latter to February and March. And we read (o) of their sowing seventy days before the passover, which was within six weeks of the beginning of barley harvest.

Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields] Pointing to the lands which lay near the city of Sychar :

For they are white already to harvest] Alluding to the corn-fields, which, when ripe, and near harvest, look white: hence we read (p) of, שדה חלבן "the white field," which the Jews say is a field sown with wheat or barley, and so called, to distinguish it from a field planted with trees; though it may be rather, that it is so called from its white look when ripe. So the three Targums paraphrase *Genesis* xlix. 12. "His hills, (his valleys, or fields, "as Onkelos) יתרון "are white with corn, and "flocks of sheep." Christ here speaks not literally; for the fields could not be white at such a distance from harvest; but spiritually, of a harvest of souls; and has regard to the large number of Samaritans that were just now coming out of the city, and were within sight, and covered the adjacent fields: and these he calls upon his disciples to lift up their eyes and behold; and suggests to them, that it was not a time for eating and drinking, but for working, since here was such a number of souls to be gathered in: and thus, as from corporal food he proceeded to treat of spiritual food; so from a literal harvest he goes on to speak of a spiritual one, and encourages his disciples to labour in it, by the following arguments.

36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

He that reapeth, &c.] Angels are sometimes called *reapers*, and so are ministers of the Gospel here. The work and ministry of the apostles are here expressed by *reaping*: for as in reaping, when the corn is ripe, the sickle is put in, and the corn is cut down, and laid to the ground, and then bound in sheaves, and gathered into the barn; so when things are ripe in providence, and God's set time is come to convert any of his people, he makes use of his ministers for cutting them down, laying low the loftiness and haughtiness of man, stripping him of all his goodliness, and taking him off from a dependence on his own righteousness and works; and for gathering them into his churches, which is done with a great deal of joy and pleasure: and such as are so employed, and in this way made useful, shall receive wages; shall not only be taken

care of in providence, and have a sufficient and comfortable maintenance, the labourer being worthy of his hire; but shall have pleasure, delight, and satisfaction in their work; that being blessed for the good of souls, and the glory of Christ, and they having the presence of God in it; and also shall hereafter receive the crown of righteousness, when they have finished their course, and shall shine like the stars for ever and ever.

And gathereth fruit unto life eternal] By fruit are meant sinners converted and turned from the error of their ways; which are the fruit of a Gospel-ministry, of the efficacy and power of divine grace accompanying it; see *John* xv. 16. and these are gathered by the preaching of the Gospel, out from among the rest of mankind, unto Christ, the *Shiloh*, or peace-maker, and into his churches; and remain, abide, and persevere to the end; that grace, which is implanted in their souls, being, a well of living water, springing up to everlasting life; so that they are at last gathered into Christ's garner, into heaven, where they shall live with him for ever:

That both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together] The sowers are the prophets of the Old Testament, who sowed that seed in their prophecies, which sprung up in Gospel-times, and laid the foundation therein of the great success of the apostles of Christ in preaching the word; for they so clearly described the Messiah, and pointed out Christ, his offices, and his work, in so distinct a manner, that when he was come he was readily known, and cheerfully embraced; they greatly facilitated the work of the apostles, who had nothing to do but to preach Christ, as come in the flesh: and hence they reaped and gathered a vast harvest of souls every where. John the Baptist also was one that sowed; he prepared the way of the Lord; and made straight his paths: and our Lord himself was a sower, that went forth to sow, and who sowed good seed in the field; all which succeeded well, and were ripening apace for a general harvest; which began on the day of pentecost, after our Lord's ascension to heaven. This was in Judea; and in the Gentile world there was a sowing in providence, which contributed to make the work of the disciples more easy there, and to bring on, in time, a large harvest. The books of the Old Testament were translated into the Greek language; and the Jews were scattered in the several parts of the world; and the Greek tongue, in which the New Testament was to be written, was every where generally spoken; and these providences were ripening apace to bring on a great work there. And now, as before observed, the apostles were the reapers; they were remarkably successful in the gathering in of souls, even more than the prophets, than John.

(o) *Misna* Menschot, c. 8. §. 2. (p) *Misna* Shevith, c. 2. §. 1. & *Moed* Katon, c. 7. §. 4.

John the Baptist, or Christ himself; never was such a harvest of souls, either in Judea, or in the Gentile world, before or since; of which the conversion of these Samaritans was a pledge or earnest. Now when the whole harvest is gathered in, at the end of the world, all these will rejoice together; the patriarchs and prophets, the forerunner of Christ, and Christ himself, and all his apostles and ministers; the different parts they have had in this work all concurring and agreeing together, and illustrating in the glory of God, and the good of souls.

37 And herein is that saying true, *One soweth, and another reapeth.*

This verifies that proverbial expression so much in use, and which may be applied to different persons and cases:

One soweth, and another reapeth] The prophets sowed, and the apostles reaped.

38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

I sent you, &c.] To preach the Gospel, and gather in souls by your ministry; referring to the mission of them in *Matthew* x. 6, 7.

That whereon ye bestowed no labour.] Being sent to the Jews, who had the writings of the prophets, and were versed in them; and had learned from them that the Messiah was to come, and were now in general expectation of him; so that they had nothing more to do, than to declare to those persons who were cultivated by the prophets, and were like to ground ready tilled and manured to their hands, that the Messiah was come, and the kingdom of heaven was at hand.

Other men laboured] The prophets, and John the Baptist;

And ye are entered into their labours] To finish the work they had begun, and which was almost done beforehand.

39 ¶ And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.

Many inhabitants of the city of Sychar, which was a city of Samaria,

Believed on him] That he was the true Messiah as he had told the woman he was; and she put it to them whether he was or not: before they saw him, or had any conversation with him themselves, they believed in him; see *John* xx. 29.

For the saying of the woman which testified, He told me all that ever I did] The account she gave

was so plain, and honest, and disinterested, that they could not but give credit to it; and since the person was an utter stranger to her, and yet had laid before her the whole series of her past life and conversation, they concluded he could be no other than the Messiah, who should tell all things; and being of quick understanding or smell, was able to disclose the secrets of men.

40 So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.

The Ethiopic version reads, "all the Samaritans;" they came to him at Jacob's well, upon the woman's solicitations, and the account she gave of this extraordinary person: and after they had conversed with him, and heard him themselves, they were taken with his divine discourses, and being thoroughly persuaded that he was the Messiah,

They besought him that he would tarry with them] They were not like the Gergesenes, who besought him to depart out of their coasts as soon as he was in them: but these men were delighted with his company; and, notwithstanding his being a Jew, desired a conversation with him, and intreated that he would go along with them to their city, and stay with them,

And he abode there two days] He went with them to Sychar. He would not deny their request, lest they should be discouraged; and yet would not make any long stay with them, that he might give no umbrage to the Jews; though it is very likely from this short stay in Samaria they afterwards reproached him as a Samaritan, chapter viii. 48. Our Lord's direction to his disciples not to enter into any of the cities of the Samaritans, was not a rule to himself, or binding upon him, and was only a rule to them *pro tempore*.

41 And many more believed because of his own word;

And many, &c.] The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions add, "on him:" when he was come into the city, and had preached to the inhabitants in general, a larger multitude than before believed in him as the Messiah, and professed him, and became followers of him,

Because of his own word] Which came to them, not in word only, but in power, and was the power of God unto salvation to them; and was received by them, not as the word of man, but as the word of God; and it wrought effectually in them, and was an hammer to break their rocky hearts in pieces, and to bring them into subjection to himself, his Gospel and ordinances: whether his word or doctrine was accompanied with miracles, is not certain;

tain; this shews, that their faith in him was founded on his own word, which fell with great weight upon them. It seems to have an emphasis laid upon it, his *own* word, in distinction from the woman's saying.

42 And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

It appears that the woman kept hearing Christ, attending on him, and conversing with him; for having tasted of his grace, she could not leave him:

Now we believe, not because of thy saying] Not on account of that only: it should seem that these were the same persons that believed upon her word, before they went out of the city; and now, having heard his excellent discourses, were confirmed in the faith of him:

For we have heard him ourselves] Not only externally, with their bodily ears, but internally, having ears given them to hear, so as to understand what he said; to mix it with faith, and receive it in love; to feel the power of it in their hearts, and taste the sweetness of it, and be nourished by it; and so as to distinguish his voice from another's, as Christ's true sheep are capable of doing,

And know that this is indeed the Christ] The true Messiah, and not a false one; the Messiah spoken of by Moses, whose books the Samaritans received, as *the seed of the woman*, the Shiloh, and prophet like to Moses; the Christ of God, who is anointed to be prophet, priest, and king. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave out the word *Christ*, and only read what follows, "the Saviour of the world:" they knew him to be the Saviour, he who was spoken of as such; for his work, *to bruise the serpent's head*, implies it, and his name *Shiloh* imports as much: and besides, he is called by Jacob *God's salvation*, Genesis xlix. 18. God appointed him as a Saviour; he sent him, and he came as such, and is become the author of salvation; and his name is called *Jesus*, on this account; and a great Saviour he is; both able and willing; and he is suitable to the case of sinners; and is a complete, and an only one: and these Samaritans knew him to be "the Saviour of the world;" not of every individual person in it, for all are not saved by him; nor of the Jewish world, for many of them died in their sins; but of the Gentiles, in distinction from the Jews; see *John* iii. 16. 1 *John* ii. 2. even of all God's elect, whether among Jews or Gentiles; of all that believe in him, of whatsoever nation, and in whatsoever state and condition: so that their knowledge of him, and faith in him, were beyond that of the

Jews, who looked upon the Messiah only as a Saviour of their nation; and that the Gentiles would have no manner of benefit and advantage by him: though the Jews (g) do call the angel in *Exodus* xxiii. 20. מַלְאָכִי מְשִׁיחִי "the Saviour, or Redeemer of the world." And this the Samaritans might know from the writings of Moses, as from *Genesis* xxii. 18. and chapter xlix. 10. their present knowledge of Christ was not a mere notional, speculative, and general one, but was special, spiritual and saving, which they had from the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ; they approved of him as their Saviour; they trusted in him as such; they had an experimental acquaintance with him, and practically owned him; and which they attained to by hearing him.

43 ¶ Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee.

When he had staid two days at Sychar, conversing with, and discoursing to the Samaritans, which were the means of the conversion of many of them; he departed out of that country, and passed on his way:

And went into Galilee] As he first intended; see *1. 3.*

44 For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country.

See *Matthew* xiii. 57.

That a prophet hath no honour in his own country] All the Oriental versions read, "in his own city;" that is, Nazareth: for these words must not be understood as a reason why Christ left Judea, and went into Galilee, because he had no honour in Judea, in which was Bethlehem, the place of his nativity; but are a reason why, when he came into Galilee, he did not go to Nazareth, his own city, where he was educated, and had been brought up, and had lived the greatest part of his life, because they treated him with great disrespect and contempt; see the note on *Matthew* xiii. 57.

45 Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.

Was come into that part of Galilee in which Cana lay, as appears by what follows:

The Galileans received him] Willingly, readily, and cheerfully, with much delight and pleasure, and with marks of great esteem and respect; they received him into their houses, and entertained him, and provided for him and his disciples:

Having

(g) Zohar in Gen. fol. 124. 4.

Having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem, at the feast of the passover.] The miracles he wrought there, see chapter ii. 23.

For they also went unto the feast] As well as Jesus and his disciples: they kept the feast of the passover, and went yearly to Jerusalem on that account: so Josephus speaks of the Galileans going to the Jewish festivals at Jerusalem, when he says (r); "It was the custom, or usual with the Galileans, when they went to the holy city at the festivals, to go through the country of the Samaritans;" which was the way that Christ now came from thence to them.

46 So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

To Cana, where he had been once before; see chapter ii. 1, 2. The Syriac version here, as there, calls it "Kotne of Galilee;" and the Persian version, "Catch of Galilee:"

Where he made the water wine.] See chap. ii. 9, 11.

There was a certain nobleman] The Vulgate Latin renders it, "a petty king;" the Arabic version, and Nonnus, call him, "a royal man;" and the Syriac version renders it, "a king's servant;" with which agrees the Ethiopic, calling him "a minister, a steward, the king's domestic." The Persian version makes it to be his name, reading it, "there was a great man, whose name was 'Abdalmelic," which signifies "a king's servant:" from the whole, he seems to be one that belonged to the palace of Herod Antipas, and was one of his courtiers; who, though he was but tetrarch of Galilee, yet is sometimes called a king, Mark vi. 14.

Whose son was sick at Capernaum] Some versions, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persian, read the phrase, "in Capernaum," with the former clause, "there was a nobleman in Capernaum;" and others, as we do with this; and both may be true; for he might be an inhabitant of Capernaum, and his house be there where his son lay sick. Some think this nobleman was either Chuza, Herod's steward, Luke viii. 3. or Manaen, who had been brought up with Herod, Acts xiii. 1.

47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.

When he heard, &c.] For the fame of Christ, for his doctrine and miracles, was spread every where; so that it was known, and talked of, in

most places, where he was and what course he was steering: and this nobleman understanding that he had left Judea, and was come

Into Galilee] And having inquired in what part of Galilee he was,

He went unto him] Though it was many miles from Capernaum, where Jesus was, at least a day's journey; since, when the servants met their master, the child had been healed at one o'clock the day before; see v. 52. Some reckon it about fifteen miles, but one would think it should be more:

And besought him, that he would come down] For Capernaum, though it was built on a hill, lay lower down in the country of Galilee than Cana did, near the sea of Tiberias: a like way of speaking is used in chapter ii. 12.

And heal his son] The nobleman believed that Christ had power to do it, by what he had heard concerning him, but thought his corporal presence was absolutely necessary to it:

For he was at the point of death] Or would die: he was very near it; there was no likelihood of his recovery; the physicians had given him over; and when he left him, he seemed to be near his death, and must die, for any human help that could be obtained, or natural means that could be used.

48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

Then said Jesus, &c.] With some degree of roughness in his speech, and severity in his countenance, in a way of reproof for his unbelief, as if he could not heal his son without going down to Capernaum along with him:

Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe] This was the cast of the Jews every where, both in Judea and Galilee; they required signs and miracles to be wrought, in confirmation of Christ's being the Messiah, and which indeed was but right; and Christ did perform them for that purpose: but their sin of unbelief lay in this, that they wanted still more and more signs; they could not be contented with what they had seen, but required more, being sluggish and backward to believe. Our Lord seems to say this chiefly for the sake of the Galileans that were about him; who, though they might be acquainted with his former miracles, when among them, of turning water into wine, and had seen his wonderful works at the feast at Jerusalem, yet were very desirous of seeing more, and perhaps very pressing for this cure.

49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

Notwithstanding this reproof, and seeming denial, the nobleman presses him again, and addressing

(*) Antiq. Jud. l. 20. c. 5.

ing him in a handsome and courteous manner, importunately intreats him saying,

Sir, Come down ere my son die] Here was faith with a mixture of unbelief; he believed that Christ was able to heal his son, but he still thought that his going down with him was necessary; that he must be corporally present, and must lay his hands on him, or touch him, or speak, and command the distemper off, or something of this kind, and which must be done before he died; for otherwise should he die first, all hope was then gone; he had no notion of Christ being able to raise him from the dead.

50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.

Go, return home in peace, be not over-much troubled and distressed about this matter; leave it with me, I will take care of it; all will be well: so the Perfic version reads, "be not anxious, and "go thy way," do not be solicitous for my presence, or urge me to go with thee; depart alone, there is no necessity for my being upon the spot:

Thy son liveth] He is now recovered of his disease, and is well and in perfect health, and lives, and will live:

And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken to him] Such power went along with the words of Christ, as not only cured the son at that distance who lay at the point of death, but also the father of his unbelief; and he no more insisted on his going down with him, but firmly believed that his son was alive, and well, as Christ had said he was:

And he went his way] He took his leave of Christ, and set out for Capernaum; very probably, not the same day, it being now in the afternoon of the day; but the next morning, as should seem from what follows.

51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.

As he was going down from Cana to Capernaum, the day after he had been with Christ,

His servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth] As soon as this cure was wrought, tho' it was not known in the family how, and by whom it was done, immediately some of the servants were dispatched to carry the news to their master, that his sorrow might be removed; and he gave himself no further trouble in seeking for a cure: these meeting him on the road, with an air of pleasure, at once address him with the joyful news, that his son was thoroughly recovered of his disorder, and

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was alive, and well; news which he was acquainted with, and believed before; though it must give him an additional pleasure to have it confirmed.

52 Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.

He did not at all hesitate about the truth of it, or was in any surprise upon it; but, that he might compare things together, he asked the exact time,

When he began to amend] Or grow better; for he seemed to think, that his recovery might be gradual, and not all at once, as it was:

And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour] Which was one o'clock in the afternoon.

The fever left him] Entirely, and at once, so that he was perfectly well immediately.

53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.

He had precisely observed what time of day it was in which he conversed with Jesus, and particularly when he told him his son was alive and well, and when he took his leave of him; and by comparing the account of his servants, with that, found all things entirely agreed, and that the cure was wrought exactly at the time that Jesus spoke the words:

And himself believed, and his whole house] When he came home, he related the whole affair to his family, and he and they all believed that Jesus was the Messiah, and became his disciples and followers. If this nobleman was Chuza, Herod's steward, we have an account of his wife, whose name was Joanna, that she followed Christ, and ministered to him of her substance, with other women, *Luke viii. 3.* There is a story told by the Jews, and which seems somewhat like to this (s); "It is reported concerning R. Chanina ben Dosa, that when he prayed for the sick, he used to say, "This liveth, and this dies." It was said to him, "Whence knowest thou this? He replied, If my prayer be ready in my mouth, I know that he is accepted (of God, that is, the sick man, for whom he prayed:) but if not, I know that he will be snatched away (by the disease.)" Upon which the Gemarists give the following relation (t); "It happened that the son of Rabban Gamaliel (the apostle Paul's master) was sick, he sent two disciples to R. Chanina ben Dosa, to ask mercy "for

(s) Misn. Beracot, c. 5. §. 5.

(t) T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2.

"for him. When he saw them, he went up to a chamber, and sought mercy for him; and when he came down, he said unto them, שחלצו חמור לך "Go your way, for the fever has left him." They said unto him, Art thou a prophet? He replied, I am not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet; but so I have received, that if my prayer is ready in my mouth, I know that he is accepted; and if not, I know that he shall be snatched away; and they sat and wrote, and observed the very hour. And when they came to Rabban Gamaliel, he said unto them, This service ye have not been wanting in, nor abounded in; but so the thing was, that in that hour the fever left him, and he asked of us water to drink." Which story perhaps is told, to vie with this miracle of Christ, and to obscure the glory of it.

54 This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judea into Galilee.

That is, the second he did in that place, in Cana of Galilee; for otherwise, in Jerusalem and Judea he had done many miracles, between the former and this; see chapters ii. 23. and iii. 2. and so the following words explain it:

When he was come out of Judea into Galilee] This was the first he wrought after his coming out of Judea into Galilee, this time, and was the second that he wrought in Cana of Galilee; see chap. ii. 11.

CHAP. V.

In this chapter we learn, that Jesus went up to Jerusalem, where he cured a man on the sabbath-day, diseased eight and thirty years, at the pool of Bethesda, v. 1—7. whom Christ commanded to carry away his bed, v. 8—15. wherefore the Jews lay snares to kill Christ as a sabbath-breaker, v. 16—18. Christ defendeth himself, testifying that he is like his Father in all his actions, which are particularly set down, v. 19—30. and appealeth to the testimony of his Father, and of John, and to his miracles, v. 31—37. He exhorts to search the scriptures, and condemns the Jews for their unbelief, v. 38—47.

AFTER this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

After Christ had been in Samaria, which was four months ago, chap. iv. 35. and had been in Galilee for that time, and had cured the nobleman's son, and had done other mighty works, the time came on for one of the three festivals of the Jews; either the feast of Pentecost, as some think; or, as others, the feast of Tabernacles; or rather,

the feast of the Passover; so called in chap. iv. 45. since John is very particular in giving an account of the several passovers in Christ's ministry:

And Jesus went up to Jerusalem] According to the law of God, which obliged all the males to appear there at that time; and to shew his compliance with it, and obedience to it, whom it became to fulfil all righteousness; and this he did also; that he might have an opportunity of discoursing, and doing his miracles before all the people, which came at this time from the several parts of the land.

2 Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.

The word *market* is not in the text, and of such a market, no account is given in the scripture, nor in the Jewish writings; and besides, in our Lord's time, sheep and oxen were sold in the temple; rather therefore this signifies, the *sheep-gate*, of which mention is made in *Nehem.* iii. 1, 32. and chap. xii. 39. through which the sheep were brought into the city, to the temple. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, "there is at Jerusalem a sheep-pool;" and so it is interpreted in the Arabic version; and Jerom calls it the *cattle-pool* (a). The Targumist on *Jer.* xxxi. 39. speaks of a pool called, בריכת עגלר "the calf, or heifer-pool;" as Dr Lightfoot renders it; though the translations of it, both in the London Polyglott, and in the king of Spain's Bible, interpret it "the round pool." This pool of Bethesda, is thought by some to be the same which the Jews call the *great pool* in Jerusalem; they say (b), "Between Hebron and Jerusalem, is the fountain Etham, from whence the waters come by way of pipes, unto the great pool, which is in Jerusalem." And R. Benjamin (c) speaks of a pool, which is to be seen to this day, where the ancients slew their sacrifices, and all the Jews write their names on the wall: and some think it was so called, because the sheep that were offered in sacrifice, were there washed; which must be either before, or after they were slain; not before, for it was not required, that what was to be slain for sacrifice, should be washed first; and afterwards, only the entrails of a beast were washed; and for this there was a particular place in the temple, called, לשכר המרחץ "the washing-room;" where they say (d), they washed the inwards of the holy sacrifices. This pool here therefore, seems rather,

as

(a) De Locis Hebraicis, p. 89. L. tom. 3.

(b) Cippi Hebraici, p. 10.

(c) Itinerar. p. 43.

(d) Miso, Middot, c. 5, §. 2. Maimon, Beth Habbecchira, c. 5, §. 17.

as Dr Lightfoot observes, to have been a bath for unclean persons; and having this miraculous virtue, hereafter spoken of, diseased persons, only at certain times, had recourse to it. The Syriac and Persic versions call it, "a place of a baptistery;" and both leave out the clause, *by the sheep-market, or gate*. It is not easy to say, where and what it was:

Which is called in the Hebrew tongue, Bethesda] Which signifies, according to the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, "an house of mercy, or grace, or goodness;" because many miserable objects here received mercy, and a cure. Hegesippus speaks (*e*) of a Bethesda, which Cestius the Roman general entered into, and burnt; and which, according to him, seems to be without Jerusalem, and so not the place here spoken of; and besides, this is called a *pool*, though the buildings about it doubtless went by the same name. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read *Bethsaida*, very wrongly; and it is called by Tertullian (*f*), the pool of *Bethsaida*. The Hebrew tongue here mentioned, is, כְּתֹב שֶׁל עֵבֶר הַזֶּה "the language of those beyond the river (*g*);" that is, the river Euphrates; which is the Chaldee language, as distinct from the Assyrian language, which is called the holy and blessed language; the former is what the Cuthites, or Samaritans used; the latter, that in which the book of the law was written (*h*).

Having five porches] Or cloistered walks, which were very convenient for the diseased which lay here for a cure, so Nonnus: Athanasius (*i*) speaks of the pool itself, as in being, though the buildings round about it lay in ruins in his time; and (*k*) Daviler observes, there are still remaining five arches of the portico, and part of the basin. Now this place may be an emblem of the means of grace, the ministry of the word, and ordinances; the house of God, where the Gospel is preached, may be called a *Bethesda*, an house of mercy; since here the free, sovereign, rich, and abundant grace and mercy of God, through Christ, is proclaimed, as the ground and foundation of a sinner's hope; the mercy of God, as it is displayed in the covenant of grace, in the mission of Christ, and redemption by him, in regeneration, and in the forgiveness of sin, and indeed, in the whole of salvation, from first to last, is here held forth for the relief of distressed minds: and this Bethesda being a pool, some of the ancients have thought it was an emblem of, and prefigured the ordinance of baptism; and that the miraculous virtue in it,

was put into it to give honour and credit to that ordinance, shortly to be administered: but as that is not the means of regeneration and conversion, or of a cure or cleansing, but pre-requires them; rather it might be a symbol of the fountain of Christ's blood, opened for polluted sinners to wash in, and which cleanses from all sin, and cures all diseases; and this is opened in the house of mercy; and by the ministry of the word: or rather, best of all, the Gospel itself, and the ministration of it, may be signified; which is sometimes compared to waters, and a fountain of them; see *Isa. lv. 1. Zech. xiv. 8. Joel iii. 18*. And whereas this pool was in Jerusalem, and that so often designs the church of Christ under the Gospel-dispensation, it may fitly represent the ministry of the word there: and it being near the sheep-market, or gate, or a sheep-pool, may not be without its significancy; and may lead us to observe, that near where Christ's sheep are, which the Father has given him, and he has died for, and must bring in, he fixes his word and ordinances, in order to gather them in: and inasmuch as there were five porches, or cloistered walks, leading unto, or adjoining to this place, it has been thought by some of the ancients, that the law, as lying in the five books of Moses, may be intended by them; for under the law, and under a work of it, men are, before they come into the light, and liberty, and comfort of the Gospel; and as the people which lay in these porches received no cure there, so there is no relief, peace, joy, life, and salvation, by the law of works.

3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

In these lay many sick and weak persons; who were an emblem of men under the law of works, and in a state of unregeneracy; who are enfeebled by sin, and are impotent and unable to do any thing of themselves; as to keep the law of God, to which they have neither will nor power, and to atone for the transgressions of it; nor to redeem themselves from the curse of the law; nor to begin and carry on a work of grace upon their souls; nor to do any thing that is spiritually good; no, not to think a good thought, or to do a good action, as is required:

Of blind] These also may represent men in a state of nature, who are ignorant of, and blind to every thing that is spiritual; as to the true knowledge of God in Christ, the way of salvation by him, the plague of their own hearts, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin; to the Spirit of God, and his work upon the soul; and to the truths of the Gospel, in the power of them:

(c) De Excidio, l. 2. c. 15.

(f) Adv. Judæos, c. 13.

(g) De Semente, p. 845. tom. 1.

(h) In Chambers's Dictionary, in the word Piscina.

(i) Vid. Gloss. in T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 115. 1. Megilla, fol. 18. 2.

& Sanhedrim, fol. 21. 2.

(k) Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Yadain, c. 4. §. 5. Vid. Gloss. in T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 5. 2.

Halt] Or *lame*; this word sometimes is used, of persons in suspense about religious things, hesitating concerning them, halting between two opinions; and sometimes designates the infirmities of the saints, and their faltering in religious exercises; and here may be expressive, in a figurative way, of the incapacity of natural men to go or walk of themselves; as to come to Christ for grace and life, which no man can do, except the Father draw him; or to walk by faith in him: it is added,

Withered] One limb or another of them dried up; their arms or legs were withered, and their sinews shrunk, and were without radical moisture, or the free use of the animal spirits; and may point out carnal persons, such as are sensual, not having the Spirit, destitute of the grace of God; without faith, hope, love, knowledge, and the fear of God; without God, Christ, and the Spirit; and in a lifeless, helpless, hopeless, and perishing condition:

Waiting for the moving of the water] Hereafter mentioned: and so it is in providence, and a wonderful thing it is, that the hearts of so many unregenerate persons, should be inclined to attend upon the outward means of grace, and should be waiting at wisdom's gates, and watching at the posts of her door.

4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

This angel is not to be understood of a messenger sent from the sanhedrim, or by the priests, as Dr Hammond thinks; who has a strange conceit, that this pool was used for the washing of the entrails of the sacrifices; and which at the passover being very numerous, the water in it mixed with the blood of the entrails, was possessed of an healing virtue; and which being stirred by a messenger sent from the sanhedrim for that purpose, whoever went in directly received a cure: but this angel was an angel of the Lord, as the Vulgate Latin, and two of Beza's copies read; and so the Ethiopic version reads, "an angel of God;" who either in a visible form came down from heaven, and went into the pool; the Ethiopic version very wrongly renders it, "was washed in the pool;" or it was concluded by the people, from the unusual agitation of the water, and the miraculous virtue which ensued upon it, that an angel did descend into it; and this was not at all times, but at a certain time; either once a year, as Tertullian thought, at the time of the feast of the passover, or every sabbath, as this was now the sabbath day; or it may be

there was no fixed period for it, but at some times and seasons in the year so it was, which kept the people continually waiting for it:

And troubled the water] Agitated and moved it to and fro, caused it to swell and rise, to bubble and boil up, and roll about, and be as in a ferment. The Jews have a notion of spirits troubling waters; they speak of a certain fountain where a spirit resided, and an evil spirit attempted to come in his room; upon which a contest arose, and they saw, *וַיִּתְּרֶם הַמַּיִם* "the waters troubled," and thick drops of blood upon them (1): the Syriac (m) writers have a tradition, that "Because the body of Isaiah the prophet was hid in Siloah, therefore an angel descended and moved the waters."

Whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had] From whence it seems, that only one person at a season received a cure, by going in first into the water, so Tertullian thought (n). The Jews ascribe an healing virtue to the well of Miriam; they say, "A certain ulcerous person, went to dip himself in the sea of Tiberias, and it happened at that time, that the well of Miriam flowed, and he washed, *וַיִּשְׁתַּח* "and was healed (o)." Now this angel may represent a minister of the Gospel, for such are called *angels*, Rev. i. 20. being called of God, and sent by him with messages of grace to the sons of men; and the preaching of the Gospel by such, may be aptly signified by the troubling of the waters, as it is by the shaking of heaven, earth, and sea; see *Haggai* ii. 6, 7. compared with *Heb.* xii. 25, 26. especially when attended with the Spirit of God, who moved upon the face of the waters in the first creation; and who in and by the ministry of the word, troubles the minds of men, and whilst the prophet prophesies, causes shaking among the dry bones, which is done at certain seasons; for as there are certain seasons for the preaching of the Gospel, so there is more especially a fixed, settled, and appointed one, for the conversion of God's elect; who are called according to purpose, and at the time the Lord has appointed; and whoever now, upon the preaching of the Gospel, are enabled to step forth and come to Christ, and believe in him, are cured of all their soul-maladies and diseases, be they what they will; all their iniquities are pardoned, their persons justified, and they are saved in Christ, with an everlasting salvation: and as this cure was not owing to any natural virtue in the water, nor even to the angel's troubling it, but to a supernatural power; so the conversion of a sinner, is not owing to ministers,

(1) *Vajikra* Rabba, §. 24. fol. 155. 2.

(m) *Vid.* Hack-

span. *Interpr. Errabund.* §. 20.

(n) *De Baptismo*, c. 5.

(o) *Midrash Kohélet*, fol. 71. 4.

nisters, and to the word and ordinances as administered by them; but to the superior power of the grace of God; and which is exerted in his time, and on whom he pleases.

5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

A man was at Bethesda's pool, in one of the five porches, or cloisters, that belonged to it:

Which had an infirmity thirty and eight years] What his infirmity was, is not said; he was one of the weak, or impotent folk, for so he is called, *χ. 7.* Some think his distemper was the palsy, and though he had had this infirmity so many years, it is not certain that he had waited so long in this place for a cure; though it may be, for that he had attended some time, is clear from *χ. 7.* Nor indeed can it be known, how long there had been such a preternatural motion in this pool, and such a miraculous virtue in the water; some have thought, that it began at the repairing of the sheep-gate by Eliashib, in Nehemiah's time; so Tremellius and Junius, on *Neh. iii. 1.* and others, have thought, that it had been some few years before the birth of Christ, and about the time that this man was first taken with his disorder. Tertullian says (*p*), that there was in Judea a medicinal lake, before Christ's time; and that the pool of Bethesda, (it should be Bethesda) was useful in curing the diseases of the Israelites, but ceased from yielding any benefit, when the name of the Lord was blasphemed by them, through their rage and fury, and continuance in it (*q*); but in what year it began, and the precise time it ceased, he says not. The Perfic version here adds, "and was reduced" "to such a state that he could not move."

6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

Jesus knew he had been long in a helpless condition, and now lay in that sad case, or "in his" "disease," as the Ethiopic version supplies; even seven years before Christ was born; which is a proof his omniscience: the words may be literally rendered, as they are in the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, "that he had had much time;" or as the Arabic version, "that he had had many" "years;" that is, had lived many years, and was now an old man; he had his disorder eight and thirty years, and which seems from *χ. 14.* to have arisen from some sin of his, from a vicious course of living, perhaps intemperance; so that he might be a middle-aged man, when this distemper first seized him, and therefore must be now stricken in years:

(p) De Anima, c. 50.

(q) Adv. Judæos, c. 13.

He saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?] Which question is put, not as if it was a doubt whether he was desirous of it, or no; for to what purpose did he lie and wait there else? but partly to raise in the man an expectation of a cure, and attention in the people to it: and it may be his sense and meaning is, Wilt thou be made whole on this day, which was the sabbath? or hast thou faith that thou shalt be made whole in this way, or by me?

7 The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

To say, Sir, was a common and courteous way of speaking, much in use with the Jews, especially to strangers. The Syriac, Arabic, and Perfic versions read, "Yea, Lord;" which is a direct answer to the question:

I have no man] The Ethiopic version reads, *man*; he had no servant, so Nonnus, or servants, to wait upon him, and take him up in their arms, and carry him into the pool; he was a poor man, and such God is pleased to choose and call by his grace:

When the water is troubled, to put me into the pool] That is, as soon as it is troubled by the angel, to put him in first before any other; for it was the first man only that had a cure this way:

But while I am coming] In a slow way, by the help of his crutches, or in the best manner he could:

Another steppeth down before me] Not so much disordered, but more active and nimble: so among those that wait on the ministry of the word, some are sooner in Christ, or earlier called by his grace, than others; some lie here a long time, and see one and another come to Christ, believe in him, profess his name, and are received into the church; and they still left in an uncalled and unconverted estate.

8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

Jesus said, Arise from thy bed, or couch, on which he lay in one of the porches. These words were spoken by the same power as those to Lazarus, which called him out of his grave; as appears from the effect they had upon the man, who was in himself impotent, weak, and helpless.

9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.

As soon as ever the words were spoken by Christ, such power went with them, as restored the man to

to perfect health; and he finding himself to be quite well, rose up directly,

And took up his bed and walked] Which may be expressive of a sinner's rising from the bed of sin, and taking up the cross, or carrying the body of sin and death with him; and walking by faith in Christ, as he has received him:

And on the same day was the sabbath] Which is remarked, for the sake of what follows.

10 ¶ The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath-day: it is not lawful for thee to carry *thy* bed.

The Jews, when they saw him, either at the place, or as he walked through the streets, with his bed on his back, said,

It is the sabbath-day] Do not you know it? Surely you forget yourself, or you would never be guilty of such an action as this;

It is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed] It was forbid by the law, to carry any burden on the sabbath-day; see *Neb.* xiii. 15, 19. and *Jer.* xvii. 22. for "Carrying out and bringing in any thing, from one place to another, is said (*r*) to be work, and "one of the principal works;" and therefore forbid by the law, which says, *Thou shalt not do any work*; and one of the traditions of the elders is this (*s*), "Whoever carries any thing out, (that is, on the sabbath-day) whether in his right hand, or in his left, in his bosom, or כתיפו על כתיפו on his shoulder," is guilty; for so carried the "Kohathites." And particularly it is said (*t*), that "He that rolls up a bed of the braisers or tinkers (that is, on the sabbath-day) is bound to a "sin-offering." Which was a fold-up bed, such as tinkers, and those that went from city to city to work, had; and who carried their beds with them, as the gloss observes; and were so far from being lawful to be carried by them on the sabbath, that they might not fold them up.

11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

He answered, &c.] That is, the impotent man, who was now made whole, replied to the Jews:

He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed and walk] Intimating, that he that had such divine power, as to make him whole, had power to dispense with the sabbath, and such an action on it; and that his word was warrant and authority sufficient to support him in what he did; for he that had wrought this cure for him,

he concluded must be from God; was at least a great prophet, and to be hearkened to and obeyed, in one thing as well as another.

12 Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?

Then asked they him] Suspecting who had made him whole, and gave him this order:

What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed and walk?] They take no notice of the cure, being unwilling to give any glory to Christ, and still less to spread it; but chose rather that it should be obscured, hid, and unobserved; but they laid hold on that which they thought might be improved to his reproach and scandal; and they call him a man, as supposing him to be a mere man, and a wicked man too, for giving orders to transgress a tradition of the elders, though no mere man could work such a cure as this was. And so the Jews since, though they cannot find fault with the cure, which they put an *if* upon, yet are highly displeased with the order to take up his bed and carry it: "If, say they (*u*), he wrought a cure, lo, that is good; but why did he bid him take up his bed?" The answer may be, "To shew that he was cured."

13 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in *that* place.

The impotent man had never seen, and perhaps had never heard of Christ before, and so knew him not; and besides, Christ gave him no opportunity of conversing with him, or so much as to ask him who he was:

For Jesus had conveyed himself away] Had slidden away, as soon as ever he had wrought the miracle:

A multitude being in that place] Or "from the "multitude that were in that place:" not that he hid himself among them, and there remained undiscovered; but he passed through them, and went his way to the temple, where he found the man he had healed, as in the following verse.

14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

Perhaps Jesus found him there on the same day; for as soon as he had been at home, and laid down his bed, it is very likely he went directly to the temple, there to shew himself, attend the worship

(*r*) Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat, c. 12. §. 8.

(*s*) Mifn. Sabbat, c. 10. §. 3.

(*t*) T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 47.

& J28. 1.

(*u*) Vet. Nizzachon, p. 207.

of the place, and return thanks to God for the great mercy bestowed on him :

And said unto him, Behold thou art made whole] Cured of the disease that had troubled him so many years; and a wonderful cure it was. Well may a *behold* be prefixed; though this is here not only a note of admiration, but of attention, to what he was about to say to him. Sin is a disease, which is original, natural, and hereditary to men; it is an epidemical one, all are affected with it, and all the powers and faculties of the soul; and it is a nauseous and loathsome one; and what is mortal and incurable in itself, and only to be cured by the great physician, Jesus Christ: God's elect are attended with it as others, and being made sensible thereof, they come to Christ for a cure, and receive one, as this man did, to whom he said,

Sin no more] Intimating, that as all diseases of the body spring from sin, so had his; and that the time past of his life should suffice, for a course of sinning; and that the mercy he had received, laid him under an obligation to guard against it, to which there would still be a proneness in him. Nor did our Lord imagine, that he could hereafter live without sin, but that he should not indulge himself in it, and give up himself unto it, and live in it. So all the diseases of the soul arise from sin; and when a person is converted, he ought not to walk as others do, or as he himself has done: and though there is a propensity to sin and backslide from God after conversion, yet the grace of God teaches men to deny sin, and to live righteously; and though it cannot be thought that they should be, and act without sin, yet it becomes them not to live in sin, or go on in a course of it, as heretofore:

Lest a worse thing come unto thee] For God could send a worse disease, or a sorer affliction than he had yet done; an heavier punishment, either in this world, or that to come. And apply this to a good man, a converted man, one called by grace, and cured by Christ, and a worse thing through sin may come unto him than a bodily disorder, namely, the hidings of God's face; for as his presence is life, his absence is death, to such persons; and as for such who only make a profession of religion, and are externally reformed only, such, if they sin and fall away, *their latter end is worse than the beginning.*

15 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole.

The man departed, &c.] From Christ, and from the temple, not through displeasure, or as resenting what was said to him, but as highly delighted that he had found his kind benefactor and physi-

cian; and went either to Bethesda, where the miracle was wrought, and where a multitude of people were, and where he might expect to find some of the persons that had questioned him about carrying his bed, and who it was that bid him do it; or rather to the sanhedrim; see *x. 33.* compared with chapter i. 19.

And told the Jews] The members of that great council, the chief priests, scribes, and elders, whose business it was to judge of a prophet, and of any one that should set up for the Messiah,

That it was Jesus] Of Nazareth, of whom so much talk was about his doctrines and miracles, and who was thought to be the Messiah,

Which had made him whole] This he did, not out of any ill will to Christ, or with any bad design upon him, to impeach and accuse him as a violator of the sabbath, for what he had said and done to him; for this would have been most ungrateful, and even barbarous, brutish, and diabolical; but with a good intention, that Jesus might have the glory of the cure, and that others of his fellow-creatures in distress might know where, and from whom to have relief; and chiefly that the sanhedrim might be induced hereby to believe that Jesus was the Messiah, and to declare and patronize him as such: and that his end was good, is clear from this, that he does not say it was Jesus that bid him take up his bed and walk, which was what the Jews cavilled at, not caring to hear of the cure, but that made him whole: he observes the miracle to them with a grateful spirit, to the honour of his physician, and that he might be thought to be what he really was.

16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath-day.

Persecuted him with their tongues, reproaching and reviling him, as a sabbath-breaker, a destroyer of the law, and a sinful wicked man:

And sought to slay him] Either in a violent way, by setting the zealots, a sort of ruffians under the pretence of religion, upon him; or rather in a judicial way, summoning him before the sanhedrim, in order to condemn him to death for the breach of the sabbath, which by the law of Moses was punishable with death:

Because he had done these things on the sabbath-day] Because he had cured the man of his disease, under which he had laboured eight and thirty years, and had ordered him to take up his bed, and walk home with it on his back on the sabbath-day. This drew upon him their resentment, to such a degree, that they not only persecuted him with their

their tongues, but sought to take away his life. Nothing would satisfy them but his blood.

17 ¶ But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

But Jesus, &c.] Being convened before them, and charged by them with the violation of the sabbath, he vindicated himself in the following manner, saying;

My Father worketh hitherto] He who is my Father, not by creation, or adoption, but by nature, though he ended all his work on the seventh day, and rested from what he had done; yet he did not cease from working at all, but has continued to work ever since, on sabbath-days, as well as on other days; in upholding and governing the world, in continuing the species of beings, and all creatures in their being; in providing for them, and in dispensing the bounties of his providence to them; in causing his sun to shine, and showers of rain to descend on the earth; and in taking care of, and protecting even the meanest of his creatures; and much more men; and still more his own people:

And I work] Or, "also I work;" as the Syriac and Arabic versions read; that is, in conjunction with him, as a co-efficient cause in the works of providence, in the government of the world, in upholding all things in it, in bearing up the pillars of the earth, in holding things together, and sustaining all creatures: or, I also work in imitation of him, in doing good both to the bodies and souls of men on the sabbath-day, being the Lord of it: I do but what my Father does; and therefore, as he is not to be blamed for his works on that day, as none will say he is, no more am I. So Philo the Jew says (x); "God never ceases to work; but as it is the property of fire to burn, and of snow to cool, so of God to work." And what most men call Fortune, he calls the divine *Logos*, or Word, to whom he ascribes all the affairs of providence (y).

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him] The Jews were therefore the more desirous to take away his life, and were more bent and resolute upon it, and studied all ways and means how to bring it about:

Because he had not only broken the sabbath] As they imagined; for he had not really broken it: and if they had known what that means, that God will have mercy and not sacrifice, they would have been

convinced that he had not broke it by this act of mercy to a poor distressed object:

But said also that God was his Father] His own Father, his proper Father, his Father by nature, and that he was his own Son by nature; and this they gathered from his calling him *my Father*, and assuming a co-operation with him in his divine works:

Making himself equal with God] To be of the same nature, and have the same perfections, and do the same works; for by saying that God was his Father, and so that he was the Son of God, a phrase, which, with them, signified a divine person, as they might learn from *Psalms* ii. 7, 12. and by ascribing the same operations to himself as to his Father, they rightly understood him, that he asserted his equality with him; for had he intended no more, and had they imagined that he intended no more by calling God his Father, than that he was so by creation, as he is to all men, or by adoption, as he was to the Jews, they would not have been so angry with him; for the phrase, in this sense, they used themselves: but they understood him otherwise, as asserting his proper Deity, and perfect equality with the Father; and therefore to the charge of sabbath-breaking, they added that of blasphemy, and on account of both, sought to put him to death; for, according to their canons, both the sabbath-breaker and the blasphemer were to be stoned (z).

19 ¶ Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

Then answered Jesus and said unto them] They charged him with blasphemy for calling God his Father, and making himself equal to him: and his answer is so far from denying the thing, or observing any mistake, or misrepresentation of his words, that he allows the whole, and vindicates himself in so saying:

Verily, verily] Nothing is more certain; it may be depended on as truth; I who am truth itself, the *Amen*, and faithful witness, aver it with the greatest assurance,

The Son can do nothing of himself] Or he does nothing of himself, nor will he do any thing of himself; that is, he neither does, nor will, nor can do any thing alone or separate from his Father, or in which he is not concerned; not any thing without his knowledge and consent, or contrary to his will: he does every thing in conjunction with him; with the same power, having the same

(x) *Leg. Alleg.* l. i. p. 43.
chap. p. 318.

(y) *Quod Deus sit immu-*

(z) *Misna Sanhedrim, c. 7. §. 4.*

same will, being of the same nature, and equal to each other: for these words do not design any weakness in the Son, or want of power in him to do any thing of himself; that is, by his own power: for he has by his word of power spoke all things out of nothing, and by the same upholds all things; he has himself bore the sins of his people, and by himself purged them away, and has raised himself from the dead; but they express his perfection, that he does nothing, and can do nothing of himself, in opposition to his Father, and in contradiction to his will. As Satan speaks of his own; and evil men, alienated from God, act of themselves, and do that which is contrary to the nature and will of God; but the Son cannot do so, being of the same nature with God, and therefore never acts separate from him, or contrary to him, but always co-operates and acts with him, and therefore is never to be blamed for what he does. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it, "the Son cannot do any thing of his own will;" so Nonnus; as separate from, or contrary to his Father's will, but always in agreement with it, they being one in nature, and so in will and work. He does nothing therefore

But what he seeth the Father do] Not that he sees the Father actually do a work, and then he does one after him, as the creation of the world, the assumption of human nature, and redemption of man, or any particular miracle, as if upon observing one done, he did the like; but that he being brought up with him, and lying in his bosom, was privy to the whole plan of his works, and saw in his nature and infinite mind, and in his vast councils, purposes, and designs, all that he was doing, or would do, and so did the same, or acted agreeable to them; and which still shews and proves their unity of nature, and perfect equality, since there was nothing in the Father's mind but was known to the Son, seen, and observed, and acted up to by him. So Philo the Jew (a) says of the "Father's most ancient Son, whom he otherwise calls *the first-born*; that "being begotten, he imitates the Father, and "seeing, or looking to his exemplars and archetypes," forms species;" that is, being conversant with the original and eternal ideas of things in the divine mind, acts according to them; which he could not do if he was not of the same nature with, and equal to his Father. Moreover, the Son sees what the Father does by co-operating with him, and so does no other than what he sees the Father do, in conjunction with him: to which may be added, that the phrase shews, that the Son does nothing but in wisdom, and with knowledge;

and that as the Father, so he does all things after the counsel of his will:

For whatsoever things he doth, these also doth the Son likewise] The Son does the self-same works as the Father does, such as the works of creation and providence, the government both of the church, and of the world: and he does these things in like manner, with the same power, and by the same authority his Father does, and which proves him to be equal with him; the very thing the Jews understood him to have asserted, and which they charged him with; and this he strongly maintained. The Syriac version reads, "for the things which the Father does, the same also does the Son;" and the Persic version, "whatsoever God has done, the Son also does like unto it."

20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

The Father loveth the Son] As being his Son, his image, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person; as being of the same nature, and having the same perfections, and so equal to him; see the note on chapter iii. 35.

And sheweth him all things that himself doeth] Not as if he was ignorant of them, since he lies in the bosom of his Father, is the wisdom of God, is the omniscient God, that knows all things; not only all things in men, but all things in God, even the deep things of God: but this is said of the Father, as consulting with him, communicating his designs to him, as his equal; doing nothing without him, as he never did in the works of nature, or of grace: he drew the plan of peace, reconciliation, and salvation in him; he made the worlds by him; and he does nothing in the government of the world without him; and indeed he shews him all things he does, by doing all things; and by him he shews himself, and his works to men:

And he will shew him greater works than these] Or he will do greater works by him than these: either than the works of creation; namely, the redemption of the elect, the justification of their persons by his righteousness, and pardon of their sins thro' his blood, and the regeneration and conversion of them by his Spirit and grace; either of which is a greater work than the making of the world: or greater than he has done under the Old-Testament-dispensation; than the redeeming of Israel out of Egypt, leading them through the wilderness, and settling them in the land of Canaan; giving them the law, the statutes, and ordinances of God, and working miracles among them; for the redemption

(a) De Consul. Ling. p. 329.

he qualifies them for, by bestowing proper gifts upon them: and he exercises this judgment, by protecting and defending his people from all their enemies, so that they dwell safely under his government: as also the general judgment of the world at the last day is committed to him; which affair will be managed by Christ, the Son of God, when he comes a second time; he will then raise the dead, that *every one may receive for the things done in his body, whether good or evil*; he will gather all nations before him, and all shall stand before his judgment-seat, both great and small; he will separate one from another, the sheep from the goats, and set the one on his right hand, and the other on his left; he will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, and shew himself to be the searcher of the hearts, and the trier of the reins of the children of men, and will pass a most righteous and decisive sentence upon all: now for such a trust, and such a work as this, whether the particular government of the church, or the general judgment of the world, he would not be fit, was he not God equal with the Father; the thing he had suggested, and which he supports and maintains in this vindication of himself.

23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

That all men should honour the Son] This honour is the end of all judgment to the Son; the exercise of all authority and power being committed to him; namely, that he might have the honour given him by men that is due unto him:

Even as they honour the Father] That the same honour and glory may be given to the one, as to the other; which must never have been done, was he not equal with him; since *he gives not his glory to another*, Isaiah xlii. 8. and chapter xlviii. 11. Indeed, all men do not honour the Father as they should; the Gentiles, who had some knowledge of God, *glorified him not as God*; and the Jews, who had an external revelation of the one, true, and living God, which other nations had not, yet were greatly deficient in honouring him, which made him complain, and say, *If then I be a Father, where is mine honour?* Mal. i. 6. And Christians, who are favoured with a clearer revelation still of the Father of Christ, are much wanting in giving him his due glory; but in common he is honoured, though in an imperfect manner; nor is there so much danger of the Father's losing his honour, as of the Son's losing his: the reason is this, though the Son is in the form of God, and equal with him, yet by *taking upon him the form of a servant*, by becoming man, he has veiled the glory of his divine

person, and *made himself of no reputation*; and by reason of this was reckoned by many, or most, as a mere man: wherefore, by agreement, that judgment, power, and authority, which equally belonged to the Father and the Son, the exercise of it is put visibly and openly into the Son's hands, that he might have his due honour and glory from all men, whether they will or no: from true believers in him he has it willingly, by their ascribing Deity to him, by putting their trust in him, by attributing the whole of their salvation to him, and the glory of it, and by worshipping him: and he will be honoured by all men at the last day; they will be obliged to do it; for all judgment being committed to him, and he being judge of all, *every knee shall bow to him, and every tongue shall confess that he is Lord*, to his own glory, and to the glory of God the Father; see *Isaiah xlv. 23. Phil. ii. 10, 11.*

He that honoureth not the Son] That denies his divine Sonship, or his proper Deity; that detracts from the dignity of his person or office; that shews no regard to him in point of salvation, or of obedience:

Honoureth not the Father which hath sent him] They are so the same in nature and perfections, in power, will, affections, and operations; and their interests and honours are so involved together, that whatever dishonour is done to one reflects on the other: and indeed, whatever is done in a way of disrespect to the Son, as incarnate, and in his office-capacity, highly reflects on his Father, that sent him in the fulness of time, in human nature, to obtain eternal redemption for his people, according to a rule often expressed by the Jews; "A man's messenger is as himself;" see the note on *Matt. x. 40.*

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Verily, verily, I say unto you] Who am the Amen, the true and faithful witness:

He that heareth my word] By which is meant the Gospel, and is so called, both because it is spoken by Christ, and first began to be spoken by him; and because he is spoken of in it; his person, office, and work, peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation by him, being the sum and substance of it: and by *hearing* it, is meant, not a bare external hearing it; for so it may be heard, and not understood; and it may be understood in a notional and speculative way, and yet the consequences hereafter mentioned may not follow: but

an internal hearing it is here designed, so as to understand it spiritually, or to have an experimental knowledge of it; so as to approve of it, love, and like it; to distinguish it from that which is not his doctrine, and to feel the power of it on the heart, and yield the obedience of faith unto it: for faith in Christ himself, the sum and substance of the word of the Gospel, is hereby expressed; to which is joined faith in God his Father, they being equally the object of it; and which is introduced as a further proof of the equality in nature which is between them; see *John* xiv. 1.

And believeth on him that sent me] He does not say that believes on me, which might have been expected from him; but that believes on him that sent me, that is, on the Father; for as he that rejects Christ, and receives not his words, rejects and receives not him that sent him; so he that hears Christ's words, and receives him, and believes in him, receives and believes in him that sent him; and the same effects and consequences follow upon the one as on the other, upon hearing the word of Christ, as upon believing on the Father of Christ; and which is no inconsiderable proof of their perfect equality: for such a person that hears the one, and believes on the other,

Has everlasting life] Not only in the purpose of God, and in the covenant of his grace, and in the hands of Christ, and in faith and hope; but he has a right unto it, and a claim of it, according to the declaration of the Gospel; and besides, has the principle of it in himself, the grace of God, which springs up into, is the beginning of, and issues in eternal life: he also has a meetness for it, and has the pledge and earnest of it, the Spirit of God, and shall certainly enjoy it:

And shall not come into condemnation] Neither for original sin, though judgment has passed upon all men unto condemnation for it; nor for actual sins and transgressions; for though every one deserves condemnation, yet were there as many sentences of condemnation issued out as sins committed, not one of them could be executed on such who are in Christ Jesus, as he that believes in him is openly and manifestatively in him: the reason is, because the death of Christ is a security against all condemnation; and whoever believes in him shall not be condemned, but saved; and though he may come into judgment, yet not into condemnation: he shall stand in judgment, and be acquitted by the righteousness of Christ, which he, by faith, receives as his justifying righteousness.

But is passed from death unto life] Both from a moral death to a spiritual life, being quickened, who before was dead in trespasses and sins; and from under a sentence of condemnation, and eter-

nal death, which, as a descendent of Adam, and according to the tenor of the law of works, he was subject to, to an open state of justification, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace; the righteousness of Christ being revealed to him, and received by faith, and the sentence of justification passed upon his conscience by the Spirit; so that he who before, in his own apprehension, was a dead man in a law sense, is now alive to God, and secure from the second death, and being hurt by it.

25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

He says, with the same asseveration as before, and for the further illustration and confirmation of the same thing, occasioned by the last clause of the preceding verse, as well as improving upon the argument in *John* 21. for his equality with the Father, which he is still pursuing:

The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live] Which may be understood either of a corporal resurrection, and of some particular instances of it, which should shortly be; and of some persons who would be in the state of the dead, and to whom the voice of Christ would be attended with such power as to cause them to hear and live; as did Jairus's daughter upon his saying, *Talitha Cumi*; damsel, arise; and the widow of Naim's son, upon his saying, *Young man, arise*; and Lazarus, upon his calling to him, *Lazarus, come forth*; and which is a full proof of his being equal to God that quickens the dead: or rather, this is to be understood of a spiritual resurrection; and the rather, because this sense best agrees with the foregoing verse; and a corporal resurrection is expressed in somewhat different words, and seems to be distinguished from this in *John* 28, 29. And besides, the hour, or time of the resurrection of the above particular persons, was not strictly come; nor could they, with propriety, be said to be dead; to which may be added, that the phrase, *they that hear shall live*, and none but them, best agrees with this sense: so then by the *dead*, are meant such who are dead in trespasses and sins: who are separated from God, alienated from the life of God, and in whom the image of God is defaced; who are dead in all the powers and faculties of their souls, to that which is spiritually good; and are without spiritual breath, sense, feeling, and motion. And by the *voice* of Christ is intended his Gospel, which is a voice of love, grace, and mercy, of life and liberty, of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by him; and which being attended with his power,

power, is the means of quickening dead sinners; who may be said to *hear* it, when it comes not in word only, but in power, and works effectually in them; and is spirit and life, and the power of God unto salvation to them, when they receive it, understand, believe, and obey it: and such persons *shall live*; comfortably, pleasantly, and delightfully, a life of faith on Christ, a life of communion with him, and shall live eternally with him hereafter.

26 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

For as the Father hath life in himself] As he is the living God, the fountain of life, and is the author of life to all living creatures; or rather has eternal life in his mind, his heart, his counsel, and his covenant, and in his hands, for all his chosen ones, which seems to be the peculiar sense here:

So hath he given to the Son to have life in himself] He hath not only made the purpose of it in him, and given the promise of it to him; but even eternal life itself he has put into his hands, and secured it in him for them, 1 *John* v. 11. to give it to as many as he has given him: and he does give it to all his sheep, so that not one of them shall perish; which shews that he and his Father are one, though not in person, yet as in affection, will, and power, so in nature and essence. The Son *has life in himself*, essentially, originally, and inderivatively, as the Father has, being equally the living God, the fountain of life, and donor of it, as he; and therefore this is not a life which he gives, or communicates to him; but eternal life is what the one gives, and the other receives, according to the oeconomy of salvation settled between them: and hence it is, that all that hear Christ's voice spiritually shall live eternally; for these words are a reason of the former, and confirm the truth of them, as well as shew the equality of the Son with the Father, in that he is equal to such a trust, as to have eternal life committed to him.

27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

And hath given him authority to execute judgment also] Both in his church and kingdom, in the present state of things, and at the last day, when all shall stand before his judgment-seat: and that

Because he is the Son of man] Truly and properly man; because, though he was in the form of God, and equal to him, yet became man, and was in the form of a servant: and so reads the Ethiopic ver-

sion, "because the Son of God is the Son of man;" and therefore the authority of executing judgment, according to the council and covenant of peace, is committed to him; or that men might have a visible judge, or be judged by one in their own nature: agreeably the Persic version renders it, "because the Son himself is he who judges the sons of men;" or rather, because he is that *Son of man* spoken of in prophecy, especially in *Dan.* vii. 13. by whom is meant the *Messiah*, as the Jews themselves allow (b), and who was not a mere man, but the man God's fellow; and so being both omniscient and omnipotent, was equal to such a work, which otherwise he would not have been; see the note on *John* 7. 22. The Syriac version joins this clause to the beginning of the next verse, and reads it thus, "because he is the Son of man, marvel not at this;" let this be no obstruction to your faith of his quickening the dead, and having authority to execute judgment on all; since, though the Son of man, he is not a mere man, but God over all, as what is next ascribed to him manifestly shews.

28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

Marvel not at this] Either at the cure of the man that had been diseased thirty and eight years, as some think; or at the Son of God being also the Son of man, as the Syriac version suggests; or rather, at the dead hearing the voice of the Son of God, and living upon it; and at his having authority to execute judgment upon all, to govern and defend his own church and people, and in the last day acquit them, and to take vengeance on his and their enemies, both now and hereafter:

For the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice] This respects the general resurrection; for *there will be a resurrection both of the just and unjust*, of all that are in their graves; and though all that are dead are not in graves, or interred in the earth, as some are in the sea, &c. yet, because, the greater part are in *graves*, this phrase is chosen, to express the universality of the resurrection: and this is also a proof of the resurrection of the same body; for what else are in the graves, but bodies? And what else can come forth from them, but the same bodies? And the time is hastening on when these bodies shall be quickened, and *hear the voice of the Son of God*; which whether the same with the voice of the archangel in 1 *Thess.* iv. 16. and whether an articulate voice,

(b) Zohar in Gen. fol. 85. 4. Bemidbar Rabba, §. 13. fol. 209. 4. Jarchi & Saadiah Gaon, in *Dan.* vii. 13. & R. Jehoshua in Aben Ezra in *ibid.*

voice, or a violent clap of thunder, which is the voice of God, or only the exertion of Christ's mighty power is intended, is not easy to determine, and may be needless to inquire. Certain it is, that this voice of Christ will be attended with almighty power, as the effect following upon it will shew.

29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

And shall come forth] Out of their graves, as Lazarus came forth from his at the word of command, and as the bodies of the saints did after the resurrection of Christ, when their graves were opened:

They that have done good] Which none of Adam's posterity naturally do, or can do of themselves: such are designed here who *believe* in Christ, which to do is the work of God, and the greatest and best of works; and without which it is impossible to please God in any; and indeed, *whatever is not of faith, is sin*, and cannot be a good work: a good work is that which is done according to the will of God, from love to him, in faith, and with a view to his glory; and those that do such works shall come forth

Unto the resurrection of life] That is, unto everlasting life, glory, and happiness; this is the first and better resurrection; and those that have part in it, over them the second death shall have no power. All shall rise to life, to an immortal life, so as never to die more; yet only good men shall rise to enjoy an happy and glorious life; which will lie in communion with God, angels, and saints, and in conformity to Christ, and in the everlasting vision of him:

And they that have done evil] Who give up themselves to work wickedness; whose continual employment, and the business, series, and course of whose lives it is to commit sin; who are slaves unto it, and vassals of it, and are properly *workers of iniquity*; otherwise there is no man but what does that which is evil, and that daily: these shall come forth

Unto the resurrection of damnation] That is, to everlasting damnation, shame, and reproach; they shall be condemned by the judge of the whole earth, and shall be pronounced cursed; and shall be ordered to go into everlasting fire, and shall go into everlasting punishment; which will be a punishment both of loss and sense: they will lose, or be deprived of, the presence of God, and feel his wrath in their consciences. All will rise, but with a difference; *the dead in Christ will rise first*,

in the morning of the resurrection, in the beginning of the thousand years, and therefore are here mentioned first; the rest, the wicked, will not rise until the evening of that day, till the thousand years are ended, and therefore are spoken of last. The former will rise by virtue of union to Christ, the other by his power, and both at hearing his voice; the saints will rise with bodies glorious, powerful, and spiritual; and wicked men, though with bodies immortal, yet vile and dishonourable: the one will rise to a life of joy and happiness that will last for ever, and which will be properly *life*; the other, though they will rise and live for ever, yet in misery and wo, and which will be the second, or eternal *death*; see a like distinction in *Daniel* xii. 2. to which there seems to be some reference here. And he at whose voice all this shall be, must be equal to God. X

30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

I can of mine own self do nothing] This is the conclusion of the matter, the winding up of the several arguments concerning the Son's equality to the Father, and the application of the whole to Christ. He had before been chiefly speaking of the Son, in relation to the Father, as if he was a third person; but now he applies what he had said of the Son to himself: and it is as if he had said, "I am the Son that can do nothing separate from the Father, and contrary to his will, but do all things in conjunction with him; who sees all that he does, by being in him, and co-operating with him, and do the self-same. I am the Son to whom the Father shews, and by whom he does all he does; and to whom he will shew, and by whom he will do, as a co-efficient with him, greater works than what, as yet, he has done: I am the Son that quickens whom he pleases, and to whom all judgment is committed, and have the same honour the Father has: I am he that quickens dead sinners now, and will raise all the dead at the last day; and have authority to execute judgment on all mankind." and

As I hear, I judge] Not as he hears men, or, according to the evidence men will give one of another; for it is denied of him that he will proceed in judgment in this manner, *Isaiah* xi. 3. but as he hears his Father; for being in his bosom, and one with him, as he sees, and knows all he does, his whole plan of operations, and acts according to them; so he hears, knows, and is perfectly acquainted with all his counsels, purposes, and rules of judgment, and never deviates from them. *Hearing* here signifies perfect knowledge, and understanding

standing of a cause; and so it is used in the Jewish writings in matters of difficulty, that come before a court of judicature (c). Christ was now before the great sanhedrim, and speaks to them in their own language, and as a superior judge to them:

And my judgment is just] In the administration of the affairs of his church, which are done in the strictest justice; *just and true are all his ways*, as King of saints; and in the execution of the last judgment, which will be in righteousness and truth: the judgment he passes must be right, since it is according to that perfect knowledge he has of his Father's will, which is an infallible rule of judgment:

Because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me] That is, he did not seek to gratify his own will, as distinct from his Father's, or in opposition to it; for he had no private end to answer, or separate interest, or advantage to pursue; and seeing therefore he acted according to his Father's will, and not his own, as contrary to that; his judgment must be just, and the sentence he passes right; since the will of God is indisputably such. The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, the Alexandrian copy, and two of Beza's copies, leave out the word *Father*, without altering or hurting the sense at all.

31 ¶ *If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.*

If I bear witness of myself] Which it was not allowed any man to do; nor indeed is it proper that a man should be a witness in his own cause: and, according to the Jewish canons, a man might not be a witness for his wife, because she was reckoned as himself. "An husband is not to be believed in bearing witness for his wife, that had been carried captive, that she is not defiled," *אין אדם מעיד לעצמו* "for no man bears witness of himself (d)." Christ reasons here upon their own principles, and according to their sense of things, that should he bear witness of himself; then, says he,

My witness is not true] *אין אדם מעיד לעצמו* not to be believed, or admitted as an authentic testimony: and so the Ethiopic version renders it, "is not credible;" not valid in law, or in such a court of judicature in which Christ now was; for as, according to the Jewish law, no man was admitted a witness for himself, so neither was any thing established by a single testimony, but by the mouth of two or three witnesses, *Deut. xix. 15*. Christ's meaning is, that

his testimony alone, his single witness, how true soever it was, would stand for nothing in their court; and therefore he would not insist upon it; but drop it; for *true* here, is not opposed to that which is *false*, but to that which is not valid in law. Christ's testimony was true in itself; nor could it be any other, it coming from him, who is truth itself, *the Amen, and faithful witness*; but being considered as an human testimony, and in his own cause, was not to be admitted as sufficient; and this he allows. From arguments, proving his equality with the Father, he passes to testimonies; and without making use of his own, he had enough to produce, and which were valid and authentic, and are as follow.

32 There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.

There is another that beareth witness of me] Meaning not his Father, who is another, and a distinct person, from him, as the Spirit is *another comforter*; and both distinct testifiers from him, as well as of him. This is indeed the sense of some interpreters; but the Father is particularly mentioned in *37*. and the thread of the discourse, and the climax, or gradation here used, shew, that it is to be understood of *another man*, as Nonnus paraphrases it; of John the Baptist, who is spoken of by name in the next verse, as a witness; and then a greater than he, the works of Christ, and then the Father:

And I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true] For John was now alive, though in prison, and continued to bear a testimony to Christ; and therefore he speaks of him as now bearing witness of him, and abiding by that which he had bore; and Christ knew not only that what he testified of him was true in itself, but that his testimony was a valid and authentic testimony, with the generality of the Jews; who held John to be a prophet, and looked upon him as a man of great probity and integrity, and whose word was to be taken: nor indeed could the sanhedrim, before whom Christ now was, object to his character, nor to him as a witness; nor ought they, since they themselves had so judged of him, as appears by their message to him, which Christ next fails not to take notice of.

33 Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.

Ye sent unto John] The sanhedrim at Jerusalem made a deputation of priests, and Levites to him, to know who he was, *whether the Messiah, or Elias, or that prophet*, John i. 19. Now had they not looked upon him, from what they knew of him,

(c) Mifn. Sanhedrim, c. 10. §. 2. & Maimon. in *Ibid*.

(d) Maimon. *Isture Bia*, c. 18. §. 19. Vid. Mifn. *Cetobot*, c. 2. §. 9. T. Bab. *Cetobot*, fol. 27. 2. Juchasin, fol. 56. 1.

or from the character they had of him, as a faithful witness, they would never have shewn him so much respect, and have been at so much pains and charge, as to send such a body of men so far unto him, as from Jerusalem to beyond Jordan; which circumstance our Lord improves in favour of this evidence he produces:

And he bare witness unto the truth] To Christ, who is the Truth itself; and to the truth of his person, and office; to his dignity, and eternity, as being before him, though coming after him; and to his divine Sonship, the thing now in debate, declaring, that he was the Son of God; and to his office, as mediator, pointing to him as the Lamb of God, who, by his blood and sacrifice, takes away the sins of men. The Ethiopic version reads by way of interrogation, "Did not you send unto John?" &c.

34 But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved.

But I receive not testimony from man] He stood in no need of an human testimony, nor did he rest the truth of his Deity and divine Sonship thereon: he had other, and greater testimonies to produce; as he needed not that any man should testify of man to him, he had no need that any man should testify of him; and if the testimony of men was received, as this of John could not well be objected to, the testimony of God is greater, and which he had; and therefore should not have mentioned John's for his own sake:

But these things I say, that ye might be saved] That is, he produced this testimony of John, who was a person of so great a character among them, that they might be induced by it to believe in him as the Messiah; and so be saved from that ruin and destruction, that would come upon their nation, city, and temple, for their rejection and disbelief of him.

35 He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

He was a burning and a shining light] He was not that Light, the famous Light, the Messiah, the Sun of righteousness; yet he was the phosphorus, the forerunner of that Light, and was himself a very great one: he had much light himself into the person and office of the Messiah; in the doctrines of faith in Christ, and repentance towards God; in the Gospel-dispensation, and in the abolition of the Mosaic oecconomy; and gave great light to others, in the business of salvation, and remission of sins, and was the means of guiding the feet of many in the way of peace. His light

of pure doctrine, and of an holy and exemplary conversation, shone very visibly and brightly before men; and he burned with strong love and affection for Christ and the souls of men; and with flaming zeal for the honour of God, and true religion, and against all sin and profaneness, which he was a faithful reprove of, and for which he lost his life. It was common with the Jews to call their doctors, who were famous for their knowledge and holiness of life, *lights*, *burning lights*, and *shining lights*; or in words which amount to the same. So R. Simeon ben Jochai is often called in the book of Zohar, *בנין קריש* "the holy light;" and particularly it is said of him (e), "R. Simeon, *בנין קריש* *דאורי* is as the lamp of light which burns above, and burns below; and by the light which burns below, all the children of the world are enlightened: wo to the world, when the light below ascends to the light above." So R. Abhu is called, *בנין דנחור* "the lamp of light (f):" and it is (g) said of Shuah, Judah's father-in-law, that he was, *בנין דאורי* "the light of the place;" that is, where he lived. The gloss on the place says, "he was a man of note in the city, and enlightened their eyes;" and it is very frequent with them still, when they are praising any of their doctors, to say of him, he was, *דמאור הגדול* "a great light," who "enlightened the eyes of Israel, and in whose light the people walked (h):" so among the philosophers, Xenophon and Plato are called, *duo lumina* (i); "two lights;" see the note on Matthew v. 14.

And ye were willing for a season, [or for an hour] to rejoice in his light] Or "to glory in it, or boast of it;" as the Syriac and Persian versions render it. When John first appeared among them, they were fond, and even proud of him; they gloried in him, that a man of such uncommon endowments, and of such exemplary holiness, was raised up among them; and hoped that he was the Messiah, or Elias, that was to come before him; and pleased themselves, that times of great outward honour and prosperity were hastening on: wherefore they flocked about him, and many of the Pharisees and Sadducees attended his ministry, and would have been baptized by him; but when they found that he was not the Messiah, nor Elias, nor that prophet, but bore a testimony to Jesus of Nazareth, that he was the Messiah; and ran counter to their notions of a temporal kingdom, and of birth-privileges, and their own righteousness; and threatened them

(e) Zohar in Exod. fol. 79. 1.

(f) T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 17. 1.

(g) Bereshit Rabba, §. 85, fol. 74. 4. & Mattanot Cehunah in ibid.

(h) Vid. R. David Ganz, Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 38. 1. 41. 1.

44. 2. 45. 1. 46. 2. & 47. 1.

(i) A. Gell. Noct. Attic. l. 14. c. 3.

them with ruin and destruction, both in this world and that which is to come, in case of their impenitence and unbelief; they grew sick of him, and said he had a devil, and rejected the counsel of God he declared, and despised his baptism. Such was their fickleness and inconstancy, which Christ here tacitly charges them with. They were like the stony-ground hearers, and like some of the apostle Paul's admirers among the Galatians, who at first could have plucked out their eyes for him, but afterwards became his enemies for telling them the truth.

36 ¶ But I have greater witness than *that* of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

But I have greater witness than that of John] The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, "greater than John," but wrongly; for the testimonies of Christ's works, and of his Father, are not compared with John himself, but with his testimony; and the sense is, that Christ had a greater witness than the witness of John; and so it is expressed in the Persian version: and his meaning is, that he had no need to insist upon John's testimony; he had other, and greater witnesses to produce:

For the works which the Father hath given me to finish] Such as the preaching of the Gospel, the fulfilling of the law, and the redemption of his people; all which were appointed by his Father, and given him to do, and which he compleatly finished. The whole Gospel came, and was published by Jesus Christ, and the law was entirely fulfilled by him; and the work of man's salvation was finished by him, and these bear witness to the truth of his Deity, and divine Sonship; for none but the Son of God could have done these things. The Ethiopic version reads in the singular number, "this work which my Father hath given me," &c. and if it was a single work that is referred to, the work of redemption bids fair to be it. But, these works include not only what Christ did on earth, in his state of humiliation, but what he has done since, and will do; which his Father has given him to finish, and he has finished, or will finish them; such as the resurrection of himself from the dead, the effusion of the gifts and graces of the Spirit, the spreading and succeeding his Gospel in the world, the conversion of his redeemed ones, the gathering in the fulness of the Gentiles, and the conversion of the Jews, the destruction of antichrist, the resurrection of all the dead, and the judgment of the whole world.

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Though more especially his miracles are here intended, and which, and not his mediatorial works, were demonstrations and proofs to men of his divine Sonship; see *Matthew* xiv. 33. and chapter xxviii. 54.

The same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me] And that he was in the Father, and the Father in him; or that they were one in nature, and equal in power and glory, *John* x. 30—37. and chap. xiv. 11.

37 And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

And the Father himself, which hath sent me] Not only the works he gave him to do, and which he did, but he himself in person:

Hath borne witness of me] Not only in the writings of Moses, and the prophecies of the Old Testament, but by an audible, articulate voice from heaven, at the time of Christ's baptism, *Matt.* iii. 17. which was a full testimony of the Sonship of Christ, and of the Father's well-pleasedness in him; and which was repeated at his transfiguration on the mount, *Matt.* xvii. 5. and the Sonship of Christ is the grand thing which the three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost testify of, *1 John* v. 7.

Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape] For the voices that were heard, and the forms that were seen under the Old-Testament-dispensation, from the first of this kind in Eden's garden, to the incarnation of Christ, which are ascribed to God, or to a divine person, were either by the ministry of angels, or they were voices uttered by the Son of God, or forms assumed by him, who often appeared in an human form, as a prelude of his incarnation; so that it was unusual, and wonderful, and remarkable, that the Father should bear a testimony to the Sonship of Christ by a voice from heaven; and which therefore ought to be attended to, and received as a sufficient and valid testimony.

38 And ye have not his Word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

And ye have not his Word abiding in you] Which some understand of Christ himself, the *Logos*, or Word; who, though he was now with them, being made flesh, and dwelling among them, yet would not long continue with them: though rather this designs the written word, or the scriptures of truth; and especially that part of them, H h h which

which contains prophecies concerning the Messiah, which did not dwell in them richly, nor they dwell in their meditations on them, as was requisite. Or rather, it may intend that word of God expressed in the testimony he bore to the Sonship of Christ at his baptism, by a voice from heaven, which made no lasting impression upon the minds, and hearts of the Jews that heard it; as appears by what follows:

For whom he hath sent, him ye believe not] Meaning himself; for if they had had either a due regard to the sacred oracles, or to that voice from heaven at his baptism, they would have received and embraced him as the Messiah, and sent of God, and not have disbelieved and rejected him, as now they did.

39 ¶ Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

Search the scriptures] The writings of Moses and the prophets, which were of divine inspiration and authority, and are often appealed unto by Christ and his apostles, for the truth of what they delivered; and were the standard of faith, and the test of doctrines; and therefore to be searched diligently into, for finding divine knowledge, and improvement in it, and for the trial of doctrines. The words may be rendered in the indicative, as an assertion, *Ye do search the scriptures*. The Jews had the sacred oracles committed to them, and these they read, not only their kings, princes, and judges, but the common people; who brought up their children to the reading of them, and instructed them in them: and besides this, these writings were read, and expounded publicly in their synagogues every sabbath-day; and at this time especially these records were examined, and particularly those of them which respected the Messiah, since there was now a general expectation of him: and certain it is, that the chief priests, scribes, and elders, or the sanhedrim, were very much versed in the scriptures, and could readily refer to those which concerned the Messiah; see an instance of this in *Matthew* ii. 4—6.

For in them ye think ye have eternal life] Not the doctrine of eternal life, nor the promises of it, nor the way to it, though all these are contained in them, and pointed out by them: for though *life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel*, and the promise of eternal life belongs to the covenant of grace, and the way of life and righteousness by Christ is manifested without the law, and not by it; yet there is much of the Gospel, and an exhibition of the covenant of grace, and its promises, and Christ, the way of life, is directed to typically by the tree of life, and the brazen serpent, and other things in those writings. But the meaning here is, that they imagined, by having these writ-

ings in their hands, and by their reading them, and hearing them expounded every sabbath-day, they should obtain and inherit everlasting life: hence they call (*k*) the law eternal life, and say (*l*) concerning the reading of it, "Blessed is he who hath given us his law, the law of truth, and" "has planted eternal life in the midst of us." This was an opinion of theirs: so the Persian version reads, "for such is your opinion;" and though this was a very vain one, yet it shews what a very high opinion they had of the scriptures: and now to these our Lord appeals as witnesses for him, and against which they could not object, upon their own principles:

And they are they which testify of me] As they do of his proper Deity and divine Sonship, calling him *Jehovah*, God, the mighty God, and the Son of God; and of his offices as prophet, priest, and king; and of his incarnation of a virgin; and of the tribe, family, and place of his birth; of the miracles which he should work; of the treatment he should meet with from men; of his sufferings and death; of the circumstances leading on to them, and attending them; as his riding on an ass into Jerusalem, the betraying him by one of his familiar acquaintance, the selling him for thirty pieces of silver; the spitting upon and scourging him, giving him gall for his meat, and vinegar for his drink, and parting his garments, and casting lots for his vesture; and the crucifixion of him, and that between two thieves; and of his burial, resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God, and of his future coming to judgment.

40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

And ye will not come to me] Which is to be understood, not of a corporal coming to him; for many of the Jews did come to him in this sense; some for one thing, and some for another; some for the loaves, that they might eat and be filled; some to see his miracles, and others to partake of the benefit of them; some to hear him preach, and others to catch and cavil at what they could: nor is bare coming to hear Christ preached, or an outward attendance on, and submission to his ordinances, such a coming to him as is here designed; for with these eternal life is not connected: bodily exercise profiteth not in this way; but a spiritual coming to Christ, or a coming to him by faith is here meant; in which sense the phrase is frequently used in this Gospel, especially in the next chapter; see *x. 35, 37, 44, 45, 65*; and those who come aright to Christ, come to him as the alone, able, suitable,

(k) Zohar in Gen. fol. 100 3.

(l) Maimon, in *Mishn. Megilla*, c. 4, § 1.

fitable, and sufficient Saviour; and in themselves as sinners, and ready to perish; and as such they are received by him with a welcome: but these men did not see themselves as such; nor did they see any need they had of coming to Christ; for they thought they had eternal life elsewhere: and such was their ignorance of themselves and Christ; and such their prejudices against him; and such the depravity, perverseness, and stubbornness of their wills, that they had no inclination, desire, and will to come to Christ, any more than power; which is an argument against, and not for the free-will of man, unless it be to that which is evil: and this perverseness of their wills to come to Christ, when revealed in the external ministry of the word, was blameworthy in them, since this was not owing to any decree of God, but to the corruption and vitiosity of nature; which being blameworthy in them, that which follows upon it must be so too; and it was the greater aggravation of their sin, that they had the scriptures which testified of Christ, and pointed at him as the way of life, and yet would not come to him for it:

That ye might have life] That is, eternal life, as is expressed in the foregoing verse, and is so read here in Beza's old copy, and in the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions. This is in Christ, not only the purpose and promise of it, but that itself: he has the disposal of it, gives the right unto it, and a meetness for it, with all the comforts arising from it, and all the promises and blessings relating to it; and all that come to Christ by faith, may, and shall have it: this is the will of the Father, the end of his giving of Christ, and of his mission and coming into the world, and is inseparably connected with believing in him.

41 ¶ I receive not honour from men.

Not but that honour from men was due to Christ; and it becomes all men to honour him as they do the Father; and he does receive honour, and glory, and blessing, from his saints, by their praying to him, praising him, believing in him, and serving him; but his sense is, that in asserting his equality with the Father, and in producing the testimonies he did, in proof of it, his view was not to obtain honour and applause among men, but to vindicate himself, and glorify his Father: nor did he say what he had just now said about men's coming to him, with any such intention, to gather a party to him, to set up himself as a temporal king, in great pomp and splendor, and receive worldly homage and honour from men, as his subjects; for his kingdom was not of this world, and coming and subjection to him, were things of a spiritual nature.

42 But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.

But I know you] Being the omniscient God, he knew not only their persons, but their hearts, the thoughts of their hearts; what was in them, and what was wanting in them: particularly,

That ye have not the love of God in you] And which is not in any man's heart naturally; for the carnal mind is enmity to God; and men by nature are haters of him, and enemies in their minds to him, till this grace, which is a fruit of the Spirit, is implanted in them in regeneration: love to God, is one of those weightier matters of the law the Jews passed over; without which, all the actions of men signify nothing: this they made great pretensions to, and would have had it thought, that it was from love to God that they sought to kill Jesus for his violation of the sabbath, and making himself equal with God; but it was not from a delight in the sabbath, or from love to the Lord of it, but out of ill-will to Christ, that they expressed such dissembled piety and false zeal: they were lovers of themselves, and not God: they were covetous men, and loved the world, and the things in it, which is inconsistent with the love of the Father; and besides, if they had loved him, they would have loved him that was begotten of him, and not sought to have killed him.

43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

I am come in my Father's name] In my Father's power and authority; by his consent, with his will, and according to a covenant with him: Christ came not of himself, of his own accord, by a separate power and will of his own, but was called, and sent, and came by mutual agreement; and brought his credentials with him, doing the works and miracles which his Father gave him to finish:

And ye receive me not] Notwithstanding this, they rejected him as the Messiah, and would not receive him as such; yea, traduced him as an impostor, and a deceiver:

If another shall come in his own name] Which some understand of Simon Magus, others of antichrist; rather the false Christs are intended, of whom our Lord speaks in *Matthew xxiv. 24.* who would rise up of themselves, and not be able to give any proof of their Mission; or do any thing which might entitle them to the character of the Messiah, or Christ, a name they would take to themselves: and so the Ethiopic version reads, "if another shall come in my name;" saying he is Christ, or the Messiah:

[*Him ye will receive*] As thousands of them did receive Barchocab, the false Christ, who rose up some years after in Adrian's time; and even some of their greatest Rabbins, as particularly the famous R. Akiba, who was his armour-bearer: and it is easy to observe, that though they were so backward to receive, and so much prejudiced against the true Messiah, they were always forward enough to embrace a false one; and indeed to follow any, that set up himself for a temporal deliverer of them; as the instances of Theudas, and Judas of Galilee, with others, shew; see *Acts* v. 36, 37. And the true reason why they rejected Christ was, because he did not appear in outward pomp and glory, nor set up a temporal kingdom, or give out that he would deliver them from the Roman yoke.

44 How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that *cometh* from God only?

[*Which receive honour, &c.*] As the Scribes and Pharisees did, who were ambitious of honour and respect from one another, as well as from the common people; doing all they did to be seen of men, and to gain applause among them; choosing the uppermost rooms at feasts, and chief places in the synagogues, and delighting in the pompous title of *Rabbi, Rabbi*; and were in expectation of the temporal kingdom of the Messiah, when they hoped to be advanced to places of great honour and profit: and all this was an hindrance to them from believing in Christ, who appeared in such an abject form, and made so mean a figure; whose doctrine was so unsuitable to their carnal minds, and whose followers were so poor and contemptible; and besides, it was made a law among them, that those who professed him to be the Messiah, should be cast out of the synagogue: hence many who were convinced that he was the Messiah, durst not confess him, lest they should lose their honour and respect among men, which they preferred to the praise of God.

[*And seek not the honour that cometh from God only*] Or "from the only God," as the Vulgate Latin; or "from the one God," as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it: the honour that comes from him, is, that of being born of him; of being a son or daughter of his, having that *new name*, which is better than that of sons and daughters of the greatest princes on earth; of being made all glorious within, and clothed with gold of Ophir, with raiment of needle-work, with the robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation; of being translated into the spiritual kingdom of Christ, and made kings and priests unto God by him; of being set on the same throne with Christ,

having on a crown of life and righteousness, and enjoying a kingdom and glory; being heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; which honour all the saints have, or shall have, and which these men cared not for.

45 ¶ Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is *one* that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.

Think not that I accuse you to "God, the Father," as the Ethiopic version reads. The Syriac and Persic versions read by way of interrogation, "Do ye think that I will," &c.? Christ is no accuser of men; no, not of the worst of men; see *John* viii. 10, 11. he came not into the world to bring charges against men and condemn them, but to save them; to be an accuser is not agreeable to his characters of a surety, a saviour, an advocate, and judge: there were enough to accuse these persons of; as their perverseness and stubbornness, in not coming to Christ for life; their want of love to God; their rejection of him, though he came in his Father's name; their reception of another, that should come in his own name; their taking honour one of another, and not seeking the true spiritual and eternal honour, which God gives; but though he hints these things to them, he would not have them think that he accused them thereof to the Father: the Jews have a notion, that when the Messiah comes, there will be accusations lodged against their doctors and wise men (*m*). "R. Zeira says, that R. Jeremiah bar Aba said, That in the generation in which the son of David shall come, there will be, *קטוּרֵי בְתוּלֵי חֲכָמִים*, accusations against the disciples of the wise men." And one of their writers (*n*) thus interprets *Daniel* xii. 1. "And there shall be a time of trouble in the family above, and there shall be accusations against the disciples of the wise men." However, there was no need for Christ to accuse them; for as it follows,

[*There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust*] By whom is meant, not Moses personally; for when on earth, he was a mediator between God and the people of Israel, and an intercessor for them; and since he has been in heaven, as *the dead know not any thing*, he knew nothing of their affairs; and when he was on the mount with Christ, his discourse with him turned upon another subject: but either the writings of Moses, as in *Luke* xvi. 29, 31. and chap. xxiv. 27. or the doctrine of Moses, as *1 Cor.* x. 2. *John* ix. 28. or rather the law of Moses, *Matt.* xxii. 24. *Mark* vii. 10. *Acts* vii. 11. and xxi. 21. And in this the Jews

(m) T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 112. 2.

(n) Jarchi in Dan, xii. 1. Vid. Abkath Rocel, par. 2. p. 265.

Jews trusted; they rested in it, and made their boast of it; and expected eternal life and salvation on account of their having it, and through their hearing it read every sabbath-day, and by their obedience to it: and now sin being a transgression of the law, this same law brings charges against them, and accuses them of the breach of the several precepts of it, and pronounces them guilty before God; it curses and passes a sentence of condemnation on them, and according to it, will they perish eternally, without an interest in Christ; for their own righteousness by the law of works, will be of no avail to them; the law, in which they trust for life, will rise up in judgment, and be a swift witness against them: so the Jews sometimes speak of the law, as witnessing against the people of Israel (c).

46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.

For had ye believed Moses] The doctrine of Moses, and what he says in his writings:

Ye would have believed me] For there is an agreement between Moses and Christ; Christ is the end of the law of Moses, and in him is the accomplishment of his writings:

For he wrote of me] In the books written by him, Christ is spoken of as *the seed of the woman, that should bruise the serpent's head*; as *the seed of Abraham, in whom all nations of the earth should be blessed*; as *the Shiloh, to whom the gathering of the people should be*; and as that prophet, who should be like unto himself, to whom the people of Israel should hearken; and he wrote many things typically of Christ. And indeed, the whole Mosaic oecconomy was typical of Christ, as the epistle to the Hebrews shews: and therefore disbelieving Christ, was disbelieving Moses; who therefore would be an accuser of them, and a witness against them.

47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

But if ye believe not, &c.] They believed them to be his writings, and that they were the word of God, and yet did not believe the things contained in them, respecting Christ; or did not see, and could not believe that they belonged unto, and were applicable to Jesus of Nazareth; and therefore it could not be supposed, that they would give credit to him, or his words:

How shall ye believe my words?] Not that Moses was greater than Christ, or rather to be credited than he: Moses indeed was faithful, but Christ was worthy of more honour and credit than he was; Moses was but a servant, but Christ was a

Son in his own house; but this is said with respect to the Jews, with whom Moses was in great veneration and esteem; and it was more likely they should regard what he should say, than what Jesus of Nazareth should, whom they despised.

C H A P. VI.

In this chapter we have the miracle of Christ's feeding five thousand men with five loaves and two little fishes, v. 1—13. Perceiving that they would by force make him their king, he departeth into a mountain, v. 14, 15. In the night walketh on the sea, v. 16—21. The multitude seek Jesus, whom they found at Capernaum, v. 22—25. Christ's exhortation to seek incorruptible food, v. 26—40. The Jews murmur, v. 41, 42. Christ telleth them, that his body is meat, and his blood drink indeed, v. 43—58. He teacheth them the true sense of his words, v. 49—65. wherefore many of his disciples go away from him, v. 66—71.

AFTER these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias.

After these things] After Christ's curing the man at Bethesda's pool, and the vindication of himself for doing it on the sabbath-day, and for asserting his equality with God; near a year after these things: for these were done at the feast of the passover, and now it was near another; and what is related here, was after the death of John the Baptist, and when the disciples had returned from preaching in the several cities and towns where Christ afterwards went, and had given an account of their success; see *Matt. xiv. 12, 13. Mark vi. 30, 31. Luke ix. 10.* Quickly after the passover was ended, Christ departed from Jerusalem, and went into Galilee, and preached in the several cities and towns in those parts, and wrought many miracles: and after these things, in process of time,

Jesus went over the sea of Galilee.] The same with the lake of Genesareth, *Luke v. 1.*

Which is the sea of Tiberias] And is frequently so called by the Jewish writers (a), who often make use of, יַם סוּלֵי מַבְרִיא "the sea of Tiberias;" and as one of the seven seas; and by other writers, it is called *the lake of Tiberias* (b); Pliny, who calls it "the lake of Genesara (c)," says, "It was sixteen miles long, and six broad, and was beset with very pleasant towns; on the east were Julius and Hippo, and on the south Tiberias, and on the north Caesarea." "riches."

(a) T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 81. 2. & Bava Bathra, fol. 74. 2. Bechorot, fol. 55. 1. Megilla, fol. 5. 2. & 6. 1. Moed Katon, fol. 13. 2. & T. Hieros. Kilaim, fol. 32. 3. & Erubin, fol. 25. 2. Yalkut par. 2. fol. 74. 1. & 98. 3. (b) Solin, c. 42. Pausan. l. 5. p. 298. (c) Liber 5. c. 25.

(c) Prefat. Echa Rabbati, fol. 40. 1.

"riches, by which name some call the lake, and "on the west Tiberias, wholesome for the hot "waters." And these are the waters which the Jews call, *הַמִּיּוֹת הַטְּבוּרִים* or, *הַמִּי* "the hot baths "of Tiberias (*d*); and from the city of Tiberias, built by Herod, and called so in honour of Tiberius Cæsar, the sea took its name.

2 And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.

They followed him from several cities and towns in Galilee, where he had been preaching and working miracles:

Because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased] So that it was not for the sake of his doctrine, or for the good of their souls, they followed him; but either to gratify their curiosity in seeing his miracles, or to be healed in their bodies, as others had been.

3 And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

Jesus went up into a desert place near Bethsaida, *Luke ix. 10.*

And there he sat with his disciples] Partly for security from the cruelty of Herod, having just heard of the beheading of John; and partly for privacy, that he might have some conversation alone with his disciples, upon their return from off their journey; as also for the sake of rest and refreshment; and according to the custom of the Jewish doctors, which now prevailed, see the note on *Matthew v. 1.* he sat with his disciples, in order to teach and instruct them.

4 And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

This was the third passover, since our Lord's baptism, and entrance on his public ministry; see chapter ii. 13. and v. 1. Whether Christ went up to this feast, is not certain; some think he did not; but from what is said in chapter vii. 1. it looks as if he did: how nigh it was to the feast, cannot well be said. Thirty days before the feast, they began to talk about it; and especially in the last fifteen days, they made preparations for it, as being at hand (*e*); and if there was now so long time to it, there was time enough for Jesus to go to it.

5 When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith

unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?

When Jesus then lift up his eyes] Being before engaged in close conversation with his disciples, and looking wistly and intently on them, whilst he was discoursing with them:

And saw a great company come unto him] Who came on foot, over the bridge at Chammath, from Capernaum, and other cities of Galilee.

He saith unto Philip] He directed his discourse to him particularly, because he was of Bethsaida, near to which place Christ now was, and therefore might be best able to answer the following question:

Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?] This, according to the other Evangelists, must be said after Christ came from the mountain, and the people were come to him, and he had received them kindly, and had instructed them about the kingdom of God, and had healed the diseased among them, and expressed great compassion for them; and after the disciples had desired him to dismiss them, that they might go to the adjacent towns and provide food for themselves; which Christ would not admit of, and declared it unnecessary, and then put this question, with the following view.

6 And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.

And this he said to prove him] Or, "tempting "him," trying his faith, and not only his, but that of the rest of the disciples; not as ignorant of it himself, but in order to discover it to him him and them, and to prepare them for the following miracle; and that it might appear the more illustrious and marvellous:

For he himself knew what he would do] Christ had determined to work a miracle, and feed the large number of people that were with him, with that small provision they had among them; and being God omniscient, he knew that he was able to do it, and that he was determined to do it, and it would be done; but he was willing first to try the faith of his apostles.

7 Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

Philip answered him] Very quick and short, and in a carnal and unbelieving way:

Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them] Two hundred pence, or Roman *denarii*, which may be here meant, amount to six pounds five shillings of our money; and this sum is mentioned, because it might be the whole stock that was in the bag, or that Christ and his disciples had; or because this was a round sum, much in use

(d) T. Hieros. Peab. fol. 21. a. & Shevith, fol. 38. 4. Kiddushin, fol. 61. 1. R. Ben. Shitah, p. 53.

(e) T. B. B. Pefachim, fol. 6. 1. Maimonides & Bartenora in Misna Shekalim, c. 3. §. 1.

use among the Jews; see the note on *Mark* vi. 37. Or this may be said by Philip, to shew how impracticable it was to provide for such a company; that supposing they had two hundred pence to lay out in this way, though where should they have that, he suggests? yet if they had it, as much bread as that would purchase, would not be sufficient,

That every one of them might take a little] It would be so far from giving them a meal, or proper refreshment, that every one could not have a small bit to taste of, or in the least to stay or blunt his appetite: a penny with the Jews, would buy as much bread as would serve ten men; so that two hundred pence, would buy bread enough for two thousand men; but here were three thousand more, besides women and children, who could not have been provided for with such a sum of money.

8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

Who also, and his brother Peter, were of Bethsaida, as well as Philip, and was a disciple of Christ's; he hearing what Christ said to Philip, and what answer he returned,

Saith unto him] To Christ, with but little more faith than Philip, if any,

9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?

There is a lad here] Who either belonged to Christ and his disciples, and was employed to carry their provisions for them; which if so, shews how meanly Christ and his disciples lived; or he belonged to some in the multitude; or rather, he came here to sell what he had got:

Which hath five barley loaves] The land of Canaan was a land of barley, as well as wheat, *Deut.* viii. 8. this sort of grain grew there in plenty, and was in much use; the Jews had a barley harvest, *Ruth* i. 22. which was at the time of the passover; for on the second day after the passover, the sheaf of the first-fruits was waved before the Lord, which was of barley. Hence the Targumist on the place just cited, paraphrases it thus; "They came to Bethlehem in the beginning of the passover, and on the day the children of Israel began to reap the sheaf of the wave-offerings, which was of barley." And it was now about the time of the passover, as appears from *Exod.* xiv. 4. and had it been quite the time, and the barley sheaf had been waved, it might have been thought that these loaves were made of the new barley; but though barley was in use for bread among the Jews, as is evident, from the mention that is made of barley loaves and cakes, 2 *Kings*

iv. 44. *Judges* vii. 13. yet it was bread of the coarsest sort, and what the meaner sort of people eat; see *Ezek.* iv. 12. Yea, barley was used for food for horses and dromedaries, 1 *Kings* iv. 28. and since therefore these loaves were, if not designed for the use of Christ and his twelve apostles, yet for some of his followers, and which they all eat of; it is an instance of the meanness and poverty of them: but however, they had better bread than this, even *the bread of life*, which is afterwards largely treated of in this chapter, which some of them at least eat of; and as our countryman Mr Dod used to say, "Brown bread and the Gospel, are good fare:" and it may be further observed, that the number of these loaves were but few; there were but five of them for five thousand persons; and these do not seem to be very large ones, since one lad was able to carry them; and indeed, these loaves were no other than cakes, in which form they used to be made:

And two small fishes] There were but two, and these small; it is amazing, that five thousand persons should every one have something of them, and enough: these fishes, seem to be what the Jews call (*f*), and which the gloss interprets *small fishes*; and by the word which is used of them, they seem to be salted, or pickled fishes, and such it is very probable these were; Nonnus calls them, *ἡδυσταλαίαι*, "fishes which were broiled," or perhaps dried in the sun; see *Luke* xxiv. 43.

But what are they among so many?] Every one cannot possibly have a taste, much less any refreshment, still less a meal.

10 And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

Make the men sit down] The Syriac version reads, "all the men;" and the Perfic version, "all the people;" men, women, and children: Christ, without reproving his disciples for their unbelief, ordered them directly to place the people upon the ground, and seat them in rows by hundreds and by fifties, in a rank and company, as persons about to take a meal:

Now there was much grass in the place] At the bottom of the mountain; and it was green, as one of the Evangelists observes, it being the spring of the year, and was very commodious to sit down upon;

So the men sat down, in number about five thousand] Besides women and children, *Mat.* xiv. 21. so that there was but one loaf for more than a thousand persons.

11 And

(f) T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 60. 2. & Sanhedrim, fol. 49. 1.

11 And Jesus took the loaves, ~~and~~ when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.

Jesus took the loaves] Into his hands, as also the fishes, in order to feed the multitude with them:

And when he had given thanks] For them, and blessed them, or implored a blessing on them, that they might be nourishing to the bodies of men, as was his usual manner, and which is an example to us;

He distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down] The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, only read, "he distributed to them that were set down:" but it was not by his own hands, but by means of the disciples, who received from him and gave it to them; so that the sense is the same:

And likewise of the fishes as much as they would] That is, they had as much, both of the bread and of the fishes, distributed to them, and which they took and eat, as they chose: in some printed copies it is read, "as much as he would;" and so the Persian version; that is, as much as Jesus would; but the former is the true reading, and makes the miracle more illustrious.

12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

When they had not only eaten, but had made a full meal, and were thoroughly satisfied, having eat as much as they could, or chose to eat,

He said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost] This he said, partly that the truth, reality, and greatness of the miracle might be clearly discerned; and partly, to teach frugality, that in the midst of abundance, care be taken that nothing be lost of the good things which God gives; and which may be useful to other persons, or to them at another time.

13 Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

They gathered them together] The several broken bits of bread, which lay about upon the grass, which the people had left, after they had been sufficiently refreshed:

And filled twelve baskets] Every disciple had a basket filled,

With the fragments of the five barley loaves] And it may be of the fishes also:

Which remained over and above unto them that had eaten] Such a marvellous increase was there, through the power of Christ going along with them; inasmuch that they multiplied to such a degree, either in the hands of the distributors, or of the eaters.

14 Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.

Then those men] The five thousand men, who had been fed with the loaves and fishes,

When they had seen the miracle that Jesus did] In feeding so many of them with so small a quantity of food; in multiplying the provision in such a prodigious manner, that after they had eat to the full, so many baskets of fragments were taken up,

Said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world] Meaning that prophet that Moses spoke of in *Deut. xviii. 15.* for the ancient Jews understood this passage of the Messiah, though the modern ones apply it to others; see the note on *Acts iii. 22.* And these men concluded that Jesus was that prophet, or the true Messiah, from the miracle he wrought; in which he appeared, not only to be like to Moses, but greater than he.

15 ¶ When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

When Jesus perceived, as being the omniscient God, who knew their hearts, and the secret thoughts and purposes of them; or as man, understood by their words and gestures,

That they would come and take him by force, and make him a king] That they had "determined," as the Arabic version renders it; or, "had it in their mind," as the Persian; to gather about him as one man, and seize him in a violent manner, whether he would or no; and proclaim him the king Messiah; place him at the head of them, to deliver the nation from the Roman yoke, and set up a temporal kingdom, in which they might hope for great secular advantages: and they might the rather be induced to take such a step, since by this miracle, they could not doubt of his being able to support such an army of men, and to succeed in the enterprize; for he that could do this, what was it he could not do? but,

He departed again into a mountain himself alone] He left the company directly, upon this resolution of

of theirs, and even took not his disciples with him, who were in the same way of thinking about a temporal kingdom as the people, and might encourage them in this undertaking: the mountain Christ went into, very probably, was the same he went up to before; the reasons of his departure, were to prevent the attempt; to shew that his kingdom was not of this world; to teach his followers to forsake the honours and riches of this world for his sake, and to let them know, that those who fought only for a temporal redeemer, were unworthy of his presence: and also he went away alone, for the sake of secret retirement, and private prayer; and it may be, chiefly, that he prayed that God would open the minds of these men, and particularly the disciples; that they might be convinced of their mistaken notions of him as a temporal prince: some copies add, "and he prayed there;" the Syriac, Ethiopic, and Persic versions leave out the word *again*; and the latter, contrary to all others, renders it, "Christ departed from the mountain alone."

16 And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea,

And when even was now come] The last of the evenings, when night was coming on; for the rest of the evenings took place before they sat down to eat, when the above miracle was wrought; see *Matt. xiv. 15, 23.*

His disciples went down unto the sea] Of Galilee, or Tiberias, to the sea-side; and this was by the order, and even constraint of Christ, who would have them go before him, that he might be clear of the multitude, and have an opportunity for solitary prayer, *Matt. xiv. 14. Mark vi. 45.* see the notes there.

17 And entered into a ship, and went over the sea towards Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them.

And entered into a ship] The ship in which they came, and was waiting for them; or into another:

And went over the sea towards Capernaum] Steered their course from Bethsaida, where they took shipping, over the sea of Galilee; at least over one part of it, a creek or bay of it, as they intended, towards the city of Capernaum, which lay over-against Bethsaida:

And it was now dark] Quite night, which made their voyage more uncomfortable, especially as it afterwards was tempestuous: but the worst of all was,

And Jesus was not come to them] As they expected, and therefore were obliged to set sail and go without him.

18 And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew.

The sea arose] Swelled, and was tumultuous and raging; the waves mounted up, and tossed the ship to and fro:

By reason of a great wind that blew] Which agitated the waters of the sea, and lifted up the waves; which storm seems to have arose after they had set sail, and were got into the midst of the sea.

19 So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid.

For the wind being contrary, they could not make use of their sails, but betook themselves to their oars, and by that means got

About five and twenty or thirty furlongs] Which were three or four miles, or little more than a league; no farther had they got, though they had been rowing from the time it was dark to the fourth watch, which was after three o'clock in the morning; all this while they had been tossed in the sea:

They saw Jesus walking on the sea] See the notes on *Matt. xiv. 25, 26, 29.*

And drawing nigh unto the ship] Though Mark says, he would have passed by them; that is, he seemed as if he would, but his intention was to come to them, and save them from perishing, as he did:

And they were afraid] That he was a spirit, some nocturnal apparition, or daemon, in an human form; see the note on *Matt. xiv. 26.*

20 But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid.

See the note on *Matthew xiv. 27.*

21 Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

They received him, &c.] When they knew who he was; and especially he was now the more welcome, as they were in distress; and he able, as they well knew, to help them:

And immediately the ship was at the land whither they went] Which was done, as Nonnus observes, by a divine motion; for not only the wind ceased, but another miracle was wrought, the ship was in an instant at the place whither they intended to go.

22 ¶ The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that

one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but *that* his disciples were gone away alone;

The day after that, in which the miracle of feeding five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes was done; the morning after the disciples had had such a bad voyage:

When the people which stood on the other side of the sea] From that in which the disciples now were, being landed at Capernaum; that is, they stood on that side, or shore, where they took shipping, near Bethsaida and Tiberias: here, after they were dismissed by Christ, they stood all night, waiting for boats to carry them over; or rather, knowing that Christ was not gone with his disciples, they continued, hoping to meet with him in the morning, and enjoy some more advantage by him:

For they saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples were gone away alone] From whence they concluded, that since there was only that boat, and Jesus did not go into it, but that the disciples went off without him, that he must be therefore somewhere on shore, and not far off, and they hoped to find him in the morning; wherefore it was very surprising to them, when they found him at Capernaum, when, and how he got there.

23 (Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks:)

Tiberias was a city by the sea-side, built by Herod, and so called in honour of Tiberius Caesar; though the Jews give a different etymology of it; they say, it is the same with *Rakkath*, Joshua xix. 35. and that it was a fortified place from the days of Joshua, and that on one side, *from the sea* was its wall (g): and so Jonathan the Targumist on *Deut. iii. 17.* says, "that Tiberias was near the sea of salt." This place became famous for many of the wise men that lived here; here was a famous university, and here the *Misna* and *Jerusalem Talmud* were written; and here the *Sanhedrim* sat, after it removed from Jerusalem:

Nigh unto the place where they did eat bread] Where the day before they had been fed in so miraculous a manner: the meaning is, either that Tiberias was near to the place where the miracle was wrought, or the boats from Tiberias came near to that place, and both were true; so that these

men that were waiting by the sea-side, had an opportunity of going over in these boats in quest of of Christ, to whom they were now become greatly attached, by feeding them in so wonderful a manner:

After that the Lord had given thanks] Which clause is added to shew, that the multiplication of the bread, and the refreshment the men had by it, were owing to the power of Christ, and his blessing it; though this is wanting in Beza's most ancient copy, and in some others.

24 When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.

Saw that Jesus was not there] At the sea-side, at the usual place of taking boat; and having reason to think he was not on that side of the lake, but was gone from thence:

Neither his disciples] When they found that there were neither of them there, but both were all gone, and considering that it was to no purpose for them to stay there,

They also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus] They might observe, that the disciples steered their course towards this place; and they knew that it was a place of general resort with Christ and his disciples; therefore they took boat, and came directly thither, and sought for him in the synagogue, it being on a day in which the people used to go thither; and where Christ, as often as he had opportunity, attended.

25 And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

Had found him, &c.] At Capernaum, and in the synagogue there; see *x. 59.*

They said unto him, Rabbi] Or *master*, a name now much in use with the Jewish doctors, and by which they delighted to be called; and these men being convinced by the miracle, that Christ was that prophet that should come, honour him with this title, saying,

When camest thou hither?] Since he did not go with his disciples, and there was no other boat that went off the night before, but that in which they went; and they came over in the first that came out that morning, and he did not come in any of them; and therefore it was amazing to them, both when and how he came, since they could not devise how he should get there by shipping, and also how he should so soon get there a foot.

26 Jesus answered them, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because

(g) T. Bah. Megilla, fol. 5. 2. So Hierol. Megilla, fol. 70. 1.

cause ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled.

[Jesus answered, &c.] Not by replying to their question, or giving a direct answer to that, which he could have done, by telling them that he walked upon the water, and found his disciples in great distress, and delivered them, and came early that morning with them to the land of Genesaret, and so to Capernaum; but not willing to gratify their curiosity; and knowing from what principles, and with what views they sought after him, and followed him; and willing to let them know that he knew them, being the searcher of hearts, and to reprove them therefore, thus addressed them:

[Verily, verily, I say unto you] This is a certain truth, and was full well known to Christ, and what their own consciences must attest:

[Ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles] Of feeding so large a number with so small a quantity of food; and of healing them that needed it, *[Luke ix. 11.]* Not but that they did regard the miracles of Christ, and concluded from thence he must be that prophet that was to come, and were for taking him by force, and proclaiming him king; but then they had a greater respect to their own worldly interest, and their carnal appetites, than to these, as follows:

[But because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled] They regarded their own bellies more than the honour and glory of Christ, and even than the good of their immortal souls, and the spiritual and eternal salvation of them: and it is to be feared that this is the case of too many who make a profession of religion; their view being their own worldly advantages, and not the spiritual and everlasting good of their souls, and the real interest of a redeemer: hence the following advice,

27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

[Labour not, &c.] Meaning either for food for the body, which is perishing; its virtue is perishing; man cannot live by it alone, nor does it last long; its substance is perishing; it is received into the stomach, and there digested; it goes into the belly, and is cast out into the draught; and that which it supports, for a while, is perishing; and both the one, and the other shall be destroyed; even meats for the belly, and the belly for meats. Now, though it becomes men to work for their bread, to provide it for themselves and families; yet they should not be anxiously solicitous about it, or la-

bour only for that, and prefer it to spiritual food. Or else food for the mind is meant, and that either in a sensual way, as sinful lusts and pleasures, the honours of this world, and the riches of it; which are sweet morsels, though bread of deceit to carnal minds, and which they labour hard for: or, in a religious way, as superstition, will-worship, external works of righteousness, in order to please God, and obtain eternal life and salvation; which to labour for in such a way, is to spend money for that which is not bread, and labour for that which profiteth not; and in each of these ways were these Jews labouring for perishing food, from which Christ dissuades them:

[But for that which endureth unto everlasting life] Either the grace of Christ, which, as meat, is quickening and refreshing, strengthening and supporting, and which causes nourishment and growth, and by virtue of which work is done; and this springs up unto everlasting life, and is inseparably connected with it; and particularly the blessings of grace, such as sanctification, adoption, pardon, and justification: or the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, which are refreshing, and strengthening, and by which the saints are nourished up unto everlasting life; or rather the flesh of Christ, eaten in a spiritual sense, by faith, of which Christ so largely discourses in the following part of the chapter:

[Which the Son of man shall give unto you] Meaning either everlasting life, which is in Christ's gift, and is a free-grace-gift of his; or else the meat which endures unto it: for though it is to be laboured for, not so as to prepare it, or to purchase it, but by asking for it in prayer, and by attending on ordinances, and exercising faith on Christ; yet it is his gift, and he gives it freely; grace, and the blessings of it, are freely given by him, and so are the Gospel and its ordinances; and also his own flesh, which is first given by him, by way of sacrifice, in the room and stead of his people, and for the life of them, *[J. 51.]* and then it is given unto them to feed upon spiritually by faith, and which is here designed:

[For him hath God the Father sealed] Designated and appointed to be the Saviour and Redeemer of his people, and has sent, authorized, and commissioned him as such; and has made him known, and approved of him, by the descent of the Spirit on him, and by a voice from heaven, declaring him his beloved Son; and has confirmed him to be the Messiah by the miraculous works he gave him to finish; for all which several uses seals are, as to distinguish one thing from another, to render any thing authentic, to point it out, or to confirm it.

28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

Then said they, &c.] Understanding by what he said, that they must labour and work, though not for perishing food, yet for durable food; and, as they imagined, in order to obtain eternal life by working:

What shall we do that we might work the works of God? Such as are agreeable to his will, acceptable to him, and well-pleasing in his sight: they seem to intimate, as if they desired to know whether there were any other works of this kind, than what Moses had directed them to, or than they had done; and if there were, they suggest they would gladly do them: for this was the general cast and complexion of these people; they were seeking for righteousness, and life, not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law.

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

Jesus answered, &c.] This is the main and principal work, and which is well-pleasing in his sight; and without which it is impossible to please him; and without which no work whatever is a good work; and this is of the operation of God, which he himself works in men; it is not of themselves, it is the pure gift of God;

That ye believe on him whom he hath sent] There are other works which are well-pleasing to God, when rightly performed; but faith is the chief work, and others are only acceptable when done in the faith of Christ. This, as a principle, is purely God's work; as it is an act, or as it is exercised under the influence of divine grace, it is man's act: *that ye believe*; the object of it is Christ, as sent by the Father, as the Mediator between God and men, as appointed by him to be the Saviour and Redeemer; and believing in Christ, is believing in God that sent him. The Jews reduce all the six hundred and thirteen precepts of the law, for so many they say there are, to this one, *the just shall live by his faith*, Hab. ii. 4 (b).

30 ¶ They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?

They said, &c.] Seeing he proposed believing in him as the grand work of God to be done, and what is most acceptable in his sight:

What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? The people of the Jews were always

requiring signs and wonders; and when they had one and another shewn them, they still sought for more, and were never satisfied; see *Matt.* xii. 39. and chap. xvi. 1. These men had lately seen various signs and miracles of Christ, as healing the sick, and feeding five thousand of them, and more, with five loaves and two fishes; and though for the time present, these had some influence upon them, and they were ready to believe he was that prophet; yet now, at least some of them, begin to retract, and signify, that unless some other, and greater signs were shewn, they should not believe in him as the Messiah:

What dost thou work? More than others, or Moses? They seem to make light of the miracle of the loaves, or at least require some greater sign and miracle, to engage their belief in him as the Messiah; and as they were lovers of their bellies, and expected dainties in the times of the Messiah, they seem to move for, and desire miracles of that kind to be wrought; and which sense the following words confirm.

31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

Our fathers did eat manna, &c.] Which was a sort of food prepared by angels in the air, and rained down from thence about the tents of the Israelites; it was a small round thing, as small as the hoar-frost on the ground; it was like a coriander seed, and the colour of it was the colour of bdellium: it was so called, either from מן "to prepare," because it was prepared, and got ready for the Israelites; or from the first words that were spoken upon sight of it, מן מה "What is it?" For they knew not what it was; and this the Jewish fathers fed upon all the while they were in the wilderness, till they came to Canaan's land, and they only; it was food peculiar to them: *our fathers did eat manna*; and so the Jews (i) observe on those words in *Exodus* xvi. 35. "And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years; the children of Israel, לא אחרת "and not another." And the children of Israel saw, and said, *What is it?* and "not the rest of the mixt multitude." Now these Jews object this miracle to Christ, and intimate, that he indeed had fed five thousand of them with barley loaves, and fishes, for one meal; but their fathers in the times of Moses, to the number of six hundred thousand, and more, were fed, and that with manna, very sweet and delightful food, and for the space of forty years; even all the while they were in the wilderness: and therefore, unless he

(b) T. Bab. Maccoth, fol. 23. 2, & 24. 1.

(i) Zohar, in *Exod.* fol. 75. 2.

he wrought as great a miracle, or a greater than this, and that of the like kind, they should not think fit to relinquish Moses, and follow him: and in proof of what they said, they produce scripture;

As it is written] In *Psalms* lxxviii. 24, 25. or rather in *Exodus* xvii. 15. and perhaps both places may be respected:

He gave them bread from heaven to eat] They leave out the word *Lord*, being willing it should be understood of Moses, to whom they ascribed it, as appears from the following words of Christ; who denies that Moses gave it: and they add the phrase *from heaven*, to set forth the excellent nature of it, which is taken from *Exodus* xvi. 4. where the manna, as here, is called *bread from heaven*.

32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

Then Jesus said, &c.] It is truth, and may be depended on, whether it will be believed or no,

Moses gave you not that bread from heaven] In which Christ denies that that bread, or manna, did come from heaven; that is, from the highest heavens, only from the air, and was not such celestial bread he after speaks of, and which came down from the heaven of heavens: and moreover, he denies that Moses gave them that bread; it was the Lord that gave them it, as is expressly said in the passage referred to in the above citation. Moses had no hand in it; he did not so much as pray for it, much less procure it, or prepare it: it was promised and prepared by God, and rained by him, and he also directed to the gathering and use of it. This stands opposed to a notion of the Jews, that the manna was given by means of Moses, for his sake, and on account of his merits: for they say (k), "There arose up three good providers, or pastors for Israel, and they are these, Moses, and Aaron, and Miriam; and three good gifts were given by their means, and they are these, the well, the cloud, and the manna; the well by the merits of Miriam; the pillar of cloud by the merits of Aaron; מן בנִיִּי מִן הַמָּנָה the manna, by the merits of Moses." This our Lord denies; and then affirms,

But my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven] He not only gave the manna to the Jewish fathers, and not Moses; but he also gives that bread which the manna was typical of, by which he means himself; who may be compared to bread, because of the original of it, or the matter of it, of which it is made, wheat; he is called a *corn of*

wheat, John xii. 24. and from its preparation for food, being threshed, and winnowed, and ground, and kneaded, and baked; all which may express the sufferings and death of Christ, by which he becomes fit food for faith; and from its being the main part of human sustenance, and from its nourishing and strengthening nature, and from its being a means of maintaining and supporting life: and he may be called the *true bread*, because he is the truth and substance of the types of him; the unleavened bread, eat at the passover, was typical of him, as he was free from sin in nature and life, and from all error in doctrine; and so was the shewbread a type of his intercession, and set forth the continuance of it, its efficacy and acceptance, of which the priests only shared; and so were the meat-offerings in the sacrifices, which were offered up day by day; and particularly the manna, the bread from heaven, the Jews were now speaking of: Christ was the truth of that type; that was but shadowy bread, Christ is the *true bread*, or the antitype of it in its name; whether it be derived from *maneh*, to prepare, Christ being the bread of life, and salvation of God, prepared in the council and covenant of grace, and by his sufferings and death before the face of all people; or from the words *man bu*, "What is it?" Christ being as little known by carnal men, as the manna was at first to the Israelites: and in its nature, kind, form, and quality; it was round in form, which might be expressive of the perfections of Christ, and particularly his eternity, being without beginning or end; it was white in colour, which may denote the purity and innocence of him; it was sweet in taste, as he, his fruits, his word, and ordinances, are sweet to them that are born again; it was small in quantity, which may set forth the meanness of Christ in his state of humiliation: it was also typical of Christ in its usefulness; it was sufficient to supply a great multitude, and that for many years, as the fulness of grace in Christ is sufficient for the whole family in heaven and in earth, in time and to all eternity: the Israelites all shared in it, and had all an equal portion of it; so all the people of God have an interest in Christ, and equally participate of the blessings of his grace, and shall enjoy the same eternal life and glory by him: one has neither more nor less than another; Christ is all in all, and made alike all things to them: and he may be called the *bread from heaven*, because he came from thence, not by change of place, but by assumption of nature, even from the highest heavens, the third heaven, from whence the manna came not; he is the *Lord from heaven*, and is such bread as has a virtue and tendency in it to nourish men for heaven, and is truly of a heavenly nature: and this is Christ's Father's gift, and is of pure grace,

(k) T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 9. 1. Seder Olam Rabba, p. 28.

grace, without any consideration of works and merits in men. Philo the Jew says (1), "the heavenly food of the soul, which is called *manna*, the divine Word distributes alike to all that ask."

33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

[For the bread, &c.] Cometh down in the way and manner just now mentioned: and which clearly points out Christ himself, who may be called *the bread of God*; to distinguish him from common bread, and to shew the excellency of him, and that he is of God's providing and giving, and which he would have his children feed upon:

[And giveth life unto the world] A spiritual life, which he is the author, supporter, and maintainer of; and eternal life, which he gives a right unto, and meetness for, and nourishes up unto; and this not to a few only, or to the Israelites only, but to the Gentiles also, and even to the whole world of God's elect: not indeed to every individual in the world, for all are not quickened now, nor shall inherit eternal life hereafter; but to all the people of God, in all parts of the world, and in all ages of time; of such extensive virtue and efficacy is Christ, *the bread of God*; in which he appears greatly superior to that manna the Jews instance in.

34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

[Then said they, &c.] At least some of them,

[Lord, evermore give us this bread] That is of divine and heavenly, and has such a quickening virtue in it. These words are said by them either seriously, and to be understood of bread for their bodies, of which they imagined Christ was speaking; and so sprung from ignorance of his sense; and from sensuality in them, who followed him for the loaves; and from a covetous disposition, being desirous of being supplied with such excellent food without charge; and from idleness, to save labour and pains in working for it; and from a vain desire of the continuance of this earthly life, being willing to live for ever, and therefore would have this bread evermore; and from a gross opinion of the plenty and delicacy of corporal food in the times of the Messiah; see the note on *Luke* xiv. 15. Or else these words are spoken ironically, by way of derision, as if there was no such bread; and if there was, that Christ could not give it. However, the words may be improved, when considered as a petition coming from, and suitable to a sensible and enlightened soul; for such who are sensible of their famishing condition by nature,

and of their need of Christ, the bread of life, and whose taste is changed, and have tasted how good this bread is, will earnestly desire always to be supplied with it, and to live upon it; for nothing is more grateful to them, and more nourishing and satisfying to their souls; they are never weary of it; it is always new and delightful to them, and they always stand in need of it, and wait in the use of means and ordinances for it: and this has always an abiding, lasting virtue in it, to feed their souls, and nourish them up to everlasting life. Josephus (m) says of the manna, which was a type of this bread, that there was such a divine quality in it, that whoever tasted of it needed nothing else: and the Jews also say (n), that "In the manna were all kinds of tastes, and every one of the Israelites tasted all that he desired; for so it is written in *Deut.* ii. 7. *These forty years the Lord thy God hath been with thee, thou hast lacked nothing, or not wanted any thing.* What is any thing? When he desired to eat any thing, and said with his mouth, O that I had fat to eat; immediately there was in his mouth the taste of fat.—Young men tasted the taste of bread, old men the taste of honey, and children the taste of oil." Yea, they say (o), "Whoever desired flesh, he tasted it; and whoever desired fish, he tasted it; and whoever desired fowl, chicken, pheasant, or peahen; so he tasted whatever he desired." And to this agrees what is said in the apocryphal book of *Wisdom*, chap. xvi. 9. 20, 21.—"Thou feddest thine own people with angels food, and didst send them from heaven bread prepared without their labour, able to content every man's delight, and agreeing to every taste; for thy sustenance (or manna) declared thy sweetness unto thy children, and serving to the appetite of the eater, tempered itself to every man's liking." All which must be understood of that pleasure, satisfaction, and contentment which they had in it; for it was a very uncommon case to eat it, and live upon it as their common food for forty years together: and no doubt but there was something remarkable in suiting it to their appetites, or in giving them appetites suitable to that, to feed upon it, and relish it for so long a time. Twice indeed in that length of time we read they complained of it, saying, that they had nothing but this manna before their eyes, and their souls loathed it as *light bread*, *Numb.* xi. 6. and chap. xxi. 5. and lusted after the flesh and the fish they had eat in Egypt. And so it is with some professors of Christ and his Gospel; for there is a mixed multitude among them, as there was among the Israelites, who dis-

relish

(m) Antiq. l. 3. c. 1. §. 6.

(n) Shemot Rabba, §. 23. fol. 108. 4.

(o) Bemidbar Rabba, §. 7. fol. 183. 1.

(1) Quis res. divin. Latref. p. 507.

relish; the preaching of Christ, and the truths of the Gospel, respecting his person, blood, and righteousness, and salvation by him; they cannot bear to have these things frequently inculcated and insisted upon; their souls are ready to loath them as light bread, and want to have something else set before them, more suitable to their carnal appetites: but to such who are true believers in Christ, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, Christ, the true manna, and bread of God, is all things to them; nor do they desire any other: they taste every thing that is delightful, and find every thing that is nourishing, in him.

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me, shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me, shall never thirst.

[Jesus said unto them, &c.] Christ is called the bread of life, because he gives life to dead sinners: men in a state of nature are dead in trespasses and sins; and whatever they feed upon tends to death; Christ, the true bread, only gives life, which is conveyed by the word, and made effectual by the Spirit: and because he supports and maintains the life he gives: it is not in the power of a believer to support the spiritual life he has; nor can he live on any thing short of Christ; and there is enough in Christ for him to live upon: and because he quickens, and makes the saints lively in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty, and renews their spiritual strength, and secures for them eternal life.

[He that cometh to me] Not corporally, to hear him preach, or preached, or merely to his ordinances, to baptism, or the Lord's table; but so as to believe in him, feed, and live upon him, as the next clause explains it:

[And he that believeth on me, shall never thirst] And which is owing, not to the power and will of man, but to divine teachings, and the powerful drawings of the efficacious grace of God; see *y.* 44, 45. Now of such it is said, that they shall never hunger nor thirst; which is true of them in this life, though not to be understood as if there were no sinful desires in them; much less, that there are no spiritual hungerings and thirstings: after they are come to Christ; but that they shall not desire any other food but Christ; they shall be satisfied with him; nor shall they hereafter be in a starving and famishing condition, or want any good thing: and in the other world there will be no desires after that which is sinful, nor indeed after outward ordinances, in order to enjoy communion with God in them, as now, for they will then be needless; nor shall they have any uneasy desires after Christ

and his grace, and the enjoyment of him; since he will be all in all to them.

36 But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

[But I said, &c.] The substance of what follows in *y.* 26. though the Persic and Ethiopic versions render it, "I say unto you;" and so refers not to any thing before said, but to what he was about to say:

[That ye also have seen me, and believe not] That is, they had not only seen him in person, which many kings, prophets, and righteous men had desired, but not enjoyed, and yet nevertheless believed; but they had seen his miracles, and had shared in the advantages of them, being healed, and fed corporally by him, and yet believed not in him as the spiritual Saviour and Redeemer of their souls; nor did they come to him in a spiritual way, for eternal life and salvation.

37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

[All that the Father, &c.] The *all* design not the apostles only, who were given to Christ as such; for these did not all, in a spiritual manner, come to him, and believe in him; one of them was a devil, and the son of perdition; much less every individual of mankind: these are, in some sense, given to Christ to subserve some ends of his mediatorial kingdom, and are subject to his power and control, but do not come to him, and believe in him: but the whole body of the elect are here meant, who, when they were chosen by God the Father, were given and put into the hands of Christ, as his seed, his spouse, his sheep, his portion, and inheritance, and to be saved by him with an everlasting salvation; which is an instance of love and care on the Father's part, to give them to Christ; and of grace and condescension in him to receive them, and take the care of them; and of distinguishing goodness to them: and though Christ here expresses this act of his Father's in the present tense, *giveth*, perhaps to signify the continuance and unchangeableness of it; yet he delivers it in the past tense, in *y.* 39. *hath given*; and so all the Oriental versions render it here. And it certainly respects an act of God antecedent to coming to Christ and believing in him, which is a fruit and effect of electing love, as is clear from what follows:

[Shall come unto me] Such who are given to Christ in eternal election, and in the everlasting covenant of grace, shall, and do, in time, come to Christ, and believe in him to the saving of their souls; which

which is not to be ascribed to any power and will in them, but to the power and grace of God. It is not here said, that such who are given to Christ have a power to come to him, or may come if they will, but they *shall* come; efficacious grace will bring them to Christ, as poor perishing sinners, to venture on him for life and salvation:

And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out] Such who come to Christ in a spiritual manner, and are brought to believe in him truly and really, he not only receives kindly, but keeps and preserves them by his power, and will not cast them out, or thrust them from him into perdition: the words are very strongly and emphatically expressed in the original, "I will not, not, or never, never, cast out without;" or cast out of doors. Christ will never cast them out of his affections; nor out of his arms; nor out of that family that is named of him; nor out of and from his church, which is his body, and of which they are members; nor out of a state of justification and salvation; and therefore they shall never perish, but have everlasting life. The three glorious doctrines of grace, of eternal election, efficacious grace in conversion, and the final perseverance of the saints, are clearly contained in these words.

38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

I came down, &c.] Not by change of place, or local motion; for Christ is the immense, infinite, and omnipresent God, and cannot be said properly to move from place to place; for he fills all places, even heaven and earth with his presence, and was in heaven as the Son of God, at the same time he was here on earth as the Son of man: wherefore this must be understood in a manner becoming his proper Deity, his divine Sonship, and personality: this descent was by the assumption of the human nature into union with his divine person, which was an instance of amazing grace and condescension. The Jew (p) objects to this, and says, "If this respects the descent of the soul, the soul of every man descended from thence; but if it respects the body, the rest of the Evangelists contradict his words; particularly Luke, when he says, chapter ii. 7. that his mother brought him forth at Bethlehem." But this descent regards neither his soul nor body, but his divine person, which always was in heaven, and not any local descent of that; but, as before observed, an assumption of human nature, which he took of the virgin on earth; and so there is no contradiction between the Evangelists; nor is descent from heaven unsuitable to Christ as a divine person, since

it is ascribed to God, *Gen. xi. 7.* and chap. xviii. 21, and if God may be said to go down from heaven by some display of his power, and intimation of his presence; Christ may be said to descend from heaven by that marvellous work of his, taking upon him our nature, and walking up and down on earth in the form of a servant; and which was done with this view, as he says,

Not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me] That is, not to do his own will, as separate from his Father's, and much less as contrary to it; otherwise he did come to do his own will, which, as God, was the same with his Father's, he being one with him in nature, and so in power and will; and though his will, as man, was distinct from his Father's, yet not repugnant, but resigned unto it: and this will he came to do, was to preach the Gospel, fulfil the law, work miracles, and obtain the eternal redemption and salvation of his people. What the above Jewish writer (q) objects to this part of the text is of very little moment: whose words are; "Moreover, what he says, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, shews, that he that sent, is not one and the same with him that is sent; seeing the will of him that is sent, is not as the will of him that sends." It is readily granted that they are not one and the same person; they are two distinct persons, which sending, and being sent, do clearly shew; but then they are one in nature, though distinct in person, and they agree in will and work. Christ came not to do any will of his own, different from that of his Father's; nor do these words imply a difference of wills in them, much less a contrariety in them, but rather the sameness of them.

39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

And this is the Father's will, &c.] This explains both who he was that sent him; the Father of him, and of his people; whose sending of him does not suppose any change of place, or inequality between them, or disrespect unto him, or compulsion of him, but agreement between them, and love to the persons on whose account he was sent; and also what is the will he came to do, and is what was declared by him to Christ, when he gave the elect to him: for this expresses his secret will in the council and covenant of grace,

That of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing] That is, that of all the elect which were given

(p) R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 44. p. 434.

(q) Ibid.

given to Christ by his Father, in eternal election, he should not lose any one of them, not the meanest among them, nor any thing of theirs, their grace, or glory, or any thing belonging to them, either to their souls or bodies, and particularly the latter :

But should raise it up again at the last day] Even every part of their bodies, and every dust belonging to them; their bodies being given to Christ, and redeemed by his blood, as well as their souls: so the Jews (*r*), speaking of the resurrection, and making mention of that passage in *Numb. xxiii. 10*. *Who shall count the dust of Jacob?* add, "And he" (that is, God) shall order it all, *וְלִי יִחַאֲדֶיךָ בָּלֶם* "and not any thing shall be lost," but all shall rise again; for, lo, it is said, *Daniel xii. 2*. *And many of them that sleep in the dust, &c.*"

40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

And this is the will, &c.] The Vulgate Latin adds, "of my Father;" and all the Oriental versions read only, "and this is the will of my Father;" this is his declared, his revealed will in the Gospel, which the sons of men are made acquainted with, as the other was his secret will, which was only known to the Son till he discovered it.

That every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him] Who so sees him as to believe in him; for this is not to be understood of a corporal sight of Christ, or of a mere speculative knowledge of him, or historical faith in him; for it is not to see him, as merely to believe what he is, the Son of God, the Messiah and Saviour of the world, or what he says, but to trust in him for righteousness, life, and happiness. Men are by nature blind, their eyes are shut to all that is spiritually good: it is the Spirit of God that opens blind eyes, and illuminates the understanding; and in his light men see not only themselves, their sin, and want of righteousness, and their lost state and condition, but Christ, and a beauty, glory, and excellency in him, ability and willingness to save, a suitableness in him for them, and a fulness of all grace; they see righteousness, peace, pardon, cleansing, wisdom, strength, grace, life, and salvation, and go out of themselves to him for all: and such a sight, though it may be but glimmering, is saving, and is self-abasing, soul-rejoicing, surprising, and transforming; is attended with certainty, reality, and evidence, and is a foretaste of glory; for it is

the will of God, and not man; of a gracious Father, of an unchangeable and eternal being, whose will cannot be resisted and made void, that such

May have everlasting life] Which will be a life of glory, and will consist in possessing glory both in soul and body; in beholding glory, the glory of one another, the glory of angels, the glory of divine truths, and mysterious providences, the glory of the divine perfections, and of the Lord Jesus Christ; and it will be a life of perfection, of perfect knowledge, holiness, obedience, love, peace, and joy; a life free from all the miseries and inconveniences of this, both in a natural and spiritual sense; a life of pleasure, and which will last for ever: to which Christ adds,

And I will raise him up at the last day] Christ will be the efficient cause, as well as he is the exemplar, the earnest, and first-fruits of the resurrection of the dead: he will indeed raise all the dead by his power, but the saints particularly, by virtue of union to him, as the members of his body, and in the first place; and the very same shall rise, and with the same numerical body, that were given to him, and believe in him: and this will be at the last of the last days, at the end of all things; and is mentioned to shew, that length of time will not hinder the resurrection of the dead; and in opposition to a Jewish notion, that the resurrection of the dead would be at the Messiah's coming: it will be at his second coming, but was not to be at his first; there was indeed then a resurrection of some particular persons, but not a general one of all the saints: that the Jews expect the resurrection of the dead when the Messiah comes, appears from their Targums, Talmuds, and other writers; so the Targumist on *Hosea xiv. 8*. "They shall be gathered from their captivity, they shall sit under the shadow of their Messiah, and the dead shall live, and good shall be multiplied in the land." And in the Talmud (*s*) it is said, "The holy, blessed God, will quicken the righteous, and they shall not return to their dust." The gloss upon it is, "The holy, blessed God, will quicken them in the days of the Messiah." And so the land of the living is said to be, "the land, whose dead live first in the days of the Messiah (*t*)."
And hence R. Jeremiah desired to be buried with his clothes and shoes on, and staff in his hand, that when the Messiah came, he might be ready (*u*); with which agree others of the more modern writers: so Kimchi on *Isai. lxvi. 5*. "They shall live at the resurrection of the dead, in the days of the Messiah." And the same writer

(*r*) Zohar in *Exod.* fol. 43. 4.

(*s*) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 92. 1.
fol. 32. 3.

(*t*) T. Hierol. Kilaim,
(*u*) Ibid. col. 2.

writer on *Jer.* xxiii. 20. observes it is said, "Ye shall consider, and not *they* shall consider; which intimates "the resurrection of the dead in the "days of the Messiah." And, says Aben Ezra on *Daniel* xii. 2. "The righteous which die in captivity shall live, when the Redeemer comes;" though some of their writers differ in this point, and will not allow the days of the Messiah, and the resurrection of the dead, to be one and the same (*).

41 The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.

The Jews then murmured, &c.] When they found that he spoke of himself as the true bread, the bread of God; and bread of life, and as descending from heaven; and which was to be fed upon in a spiritual manner by faith, which they were ignorant of, and had no desire unto: and thus being disappointed of the delicious corporal food they expected, they grew uneasy and displeased, because he said

I am the bread which came down from heaven.] For though, as yet, he had not said this in so many words, and in this direct form, as afterwards, in *John* 51. yet he had said what amounted to it, and which might be easily gathered from *John* 35, 38. The Vulgate Latin reads, "I am the living bread;" and the Perfic version, "I am the bread of life." And this last renders the first clause "mocked at him."

42 And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?

And they said, &c.] From murmuring they go to mocking and scoffing at his parentage and descent, and object this to his coming down from heaven; and intend by it to upbraid him with the meanness of his birth, being the son of Joseph, a poor carpenter; and suggest, that it was great arrogance in him to claim an heavenly original, and to ascribe such things to himself that he was "the bread of God, and the bread of life, and came from heaven!"

Whose father and mother we know?] For Capernaum and Nazareth were not at a great distance from each other; so that Joseph and Mary might be personally known by the inhabitants of Capernaum, and they might be intimately acquainted with them.

How is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?] They could not tell how to reconcile these things, not knowing either his miraculou

conception and incarnation, nor his divine Sonship; otherwise his being made of a woman, or born of a virgin on earth, is consistent with his being the Lord from heaven.

43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

Jesus either over-hearing what they said, or knowing, as God, their secret murmurs, and private cavils against themselves, thus addressed them,

Murmur not among yourselves.] Meaning neither about his descent from heaven, nor about coming to him, and believing in him; for it follows,

44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

No man can come, &c.] That is, by faith, as in *John* 35. for otherwise they could corporally come to him, but not spiritually; because they had neither power nor will of themselves; being dead in trespasses and sins, and impotent to every thing that is spiritual: and whilst men are in a state of unregeneracy, blindness, and darkness, they see no need of coming to Christ, nor any thing in him worth coming for; they are prejudiced against him, and their hearts are set on other things; and besides, coming to Christ, and believing in Christ, being the same thing, it is certain, faith is not of a man's self, it is the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit; and therefore efficacious grace must be exerted to enable a soul to come to Christ; which is expressed in the following words,

Except the Father which hath sent me draw him.] Which is not to be understood of moral suasion, or a being persuaded and prevailed upon to come to Christ, by the consideration of the mighty works which God had done to justify that he was the true Messiah, but of the internal and powerful influence of the grace of God; for this act of drawing is something distinct from, and superior to both doctrine and miracles. The Capernaïtes had heard the doctrine of Christ, which was taught with authority, and had seen his miracles, which were full proofs of his being the Messiah; and yet believed not, but murmured at his person and parentage. This gave occasion to Christ to observe to them, that something more than these was necessary to their coming to him, or savingly believing in him; even the powerful and efficacious grace of the Father in drawing: and if it be considered what men in conversion are drawn off from and to, from their beloved lusts and darling righteousnesses; to look unto, and rely upon Christ alone for salvation; from that which was before so very agreeable, to that which, previous to this work,

(*) Zohar in Gen. fol. 82. 4.

work, was so very disagreeable; to what else can this be ascribed, but to unfrustrable and insuperable grace? But though this act of drawing is an act of power, yet not of force; God, in drawing, of unwilling, makes willing in the day of his power: he enlightens the understanding, bends the will, gives an heart of flesh, sweetly allures by the power of his grace, and engages the soul to come to Christ, and give up itself to him; he draws with the bands of love. Drawing, though it supposes power and influence, yet not always coercion and force: music draws the ear, love the heart, and pleasure the mind. *Trahit sua quemque voluptas*, says the poet. The Jews have a saying (y), "That the proselytes, in the days of the Messiah, shall be all of them גרים גרים" "proselytes drawn;" that is, such as shall freely and voluntarily become proselytes, as those who are drawn by the Father are.

And I will raise him up at the last day] See the note on y. 40. compare with this verse *Judges* iv. 7.

45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

It is written, &c.] "In the book of the prophets," as the Ethiopic version renders it: the Jews divided the books of the Old Testament into three parts, the Law, the Prophets, and the *Hagiographa*; now in that division which was called the prophets, are the following words: or in one of the prophets, namely, in *Isaiah* liv. 13. so the Syriac version reads, "in the prophet;" though some think reference is had to more prophets, and more passages than one; as, besides the above mentioned, *Jer.* xxxi. 34. *Micah* iv. 2.

And they shall be all taught of God] By his Spirit, to know themselves, and Jesus Christ; that is, all that are ordained to eternal life, all that are given to Christ, and are chosen in him; all the children of Zion, and who are the children of God; these are all, sooner or later, in a special manner, taught of God: and which does not intend mere external instructions, and objective teachings by the ministry of the word, for many are so taught, who never come to Christ; but special teachings, such as are attended with the energy of divine grace, and the power of the Spirit of God, who guides into all truth, savingly and spiritually: for this is to be understood of their being taught in the Gospel of Christ, and not in the law, as the Targum paraphrases it: "All thy children shall learn in the law of the Lord." And that this prophecy refers to Gospel-times, is clear from the citation and applica-

tion of the first verse of it to the church in the times of the apostles, *Gal.* iv. 27. The Jews themselves acknowledge the prophecy belongs to the times of the Messiah, to which they expressly apply (z) the words in the fifth verse, *thy maker is thy husband, &c.* And one of their modern commentators allows (a), that this very passage, *all thy children shall be taught of God*, refers, תנח"מ "to the time to come;" that is, to the times of the Messiah: in this citation, those words, *thy children*, are left out, to shew that the words are not to be restrained to the people of the Jews, as they might seem by that clause, and to whom the Jews would limit them: for so they say (b), "They are truly taught of God, from whom prophecy comes: which comes not to all the world, but to Israel only; of whom it is written, and all thy children are taught of God." But our Lord, by these words, instructs us, and would have us observe, that all that the Father hath given him, whether Jews or Gentiles, of whom he had been speaking in the preceding verses, should be taught of God; and so taught, as to be drawn and brought to him, and believe in him, and have everlasting life: wherefore he infers from hence, that every man, whether a Jew or a Gentile, that is taught of God, will come to him in a spiritual way, and trust in him for eternal life and happiness, as follows:

Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me] Every one that has heard the voice of the Father's love, grace, and mercy in the Gospel, and has learned of him the way of peace, life, and salvation by Christ, under the influence of his grace, comes unto Christ; being encouraged by the declarations and promises of grace he has heard and learned; and ventures his soul on Christ, and commits it to him; trusting and relying on his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, for justification, pardon, atonement, acceptance with God, and eternal life.

46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

Not that any man, &c.] This is said, lest it should be thought from the above words, that our Lord meant that men should be so taught of God, as that they should visibly see the Father, and vocally hear his voice, and be personally instructed by him; for his voice is not heard, nor his shape seen; see chapter i. 18. and v. 37.

Save he which is of God] Who is begotten of him, and of the same nature and perfections with him

(z) *Shemot Rabba*, §. 15. fol. 102. 4.

(a) *Kimchi* in loc.

(b) *Zohar* in *Exod.* fol. 70. 1.

(y) *T. Bab. Avuda Zara*, fol. 3. 2. & 24. 1.

him, though a distinct person from him, and who was always with him, and lay in his bosom :

He hath seen the Father] Has perfect knowledge of him, personal communion with him ; has seen the perfections and glory of his person, and the thoughts, purposes, and counsels of his heart ; his whole mind, and will, and all the grace, goodness, and mercy which is in him, and has declared it ; see *John* i. 18.

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

I say, this is a certain truth, and to be depended on :

He that believeth on me hath everlasting life] Not only he may have it, as in *John* 40. and shall have it, but he has it ; he has it in Christ his head and representative ; he has it in the covenant of grace ; he has it in faith and hope ; he has a right unto it, and a meetness for it ; he has the earnest of it, the grace and Spirit of God ; and he has the beginning and foretastes of it in his soul, and shall certainly enjoy it.

48 I am that bread of life.

See the note on verse 35.

49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

All the while they were in the wilderness, for the space of forty years, till they came to the borders of the land of Canaan ; this was their only food on which they lived, during their travels through the wilderness. It is observable, that Christ says, not *our fathers*, but *your fathers* ; for though Christ, as concerning the flesh, came of these fathers, yet in every sense they were rather theirs than his ; because regard may be had to such of them more especially who eat the manna as common food, and not as spiritual meat, as typical of the Messiah, as others did ; and whom, these their offspring did very much resemble. Though perhaps the reason of the use of this phrase may be, because the Jews themselves had used it in *John* 31. and Christ takes it up from them.

And are dead] This food, though it supported them in life for a while, could not preserve them from a corporal death, and still less from an eternal one ; for some of them not only died the first, but the second death.

50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

This is the bread, &c.] Namely, that of which he had spoken, *John* 32, 33, 35, 48. meaning himself ;

That a man may eat thereof, and not die] For this heavenly bread is soul-quickening, soul-strengthening, and soul-satisfying food ; nor can there be any want where this is : eating of it is not to be understood corporally, as these Capernaïtes took it ; nor sacramentally, as if it was confined to the ordinance of the Lord's supper, which was not as yet instituted ; but more largely of eating and feeding upon Christ spiritually by faith ; he is, by the believer, to be fed upon wholly, and only ; all of him, and none but him, and that daily ; for there is the same need of daily bread for our souls, as for our bodies ; and also largely and freely, as such may do ; and likewise joyfully, with gladness and singleness of heart ; such as are Christ's beloved, and his friends, may eat ; they have liberty, a hearty welcome to eat ; and so have every one that have a will, an inclination, a desire to eat, and all overcomers, whom Christ makes more than conquerors, *1 Cor.* v. 1. *Rev.* ii. 7, 17. and chap. xxii. 17. which liberty is owing to Christ's gracious invitation, and to his and the Father's free gift ; and to the openness and ease of access of all sensible sinners to him : and the consequence and effect of such eating is, that it secures from dying ; not from a corporal death, to which men are appointed, and saints themselves are subject, though it is indeed abolished by Christ as a penal evil ; nor shall his people continue under the power of it, but shall rise again to everlasting life : but then they are, through eating this bread, secured from a spiritual death ; for though there may be a decline, as to the exercise of grace, and a want of liveliness, and they may fear they are ready to die, and conclude they are free among the dead, and that their strength and hope are perished ; yet he that lives and believes in Christ, the resurrection and the life, shall never die ; and such are also secure from eternal death, on them the second death shall have no power, nor shall they ever be hurt by it.

51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven : if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever : and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

I am the living bread, &c.] This is the same with what is said in *John* 33, 35, 48. which is true of Christ, as he has life in him ; and is the author and giver of life to others ; and is of an heavenly original, and came from heaven to give life to men ; and such is the virtue of this living and heavenly bread, that

If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever] Not a natural, but a spiritual life ; a life of sanctification,

fication, which is begun here, and will be perfected hereafter; and a life of glory, which will never end:

And the bread that I will give is my flesh] Or body, as all the Oriental versions render it. Here our Lord explains more clearly and fully what he means, under the notion of bread; and which shews, that by bread he did not design merely his doctrine, but his flesh, his human nature; though not as abstracted from his Deity, but as in union with it:

Which I will give for the life of the world] And which he did, by the offering up of his body, and making his soul, or giving himself an offering, a propitiatory sacrifice for sin; which was done in the most free and voluntary manner, in the room and stead of his people, to procure eternal life for them, even for the whole world of his elect, whether among Jews or Gentiles; particularly the latter are here meant, in opposition to a notion of the Jews, that the world, or the Gentiles, would receive no benefit by the Messiah when he came; see the note on chapter iii. 16.

52 The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

The Jews fell to cavilling and disputing one among another; some understanding Christ, and others not; some being for him, and vindicated what he said; and others being against him, and who were the majority, objected,

Saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?] Which is to be understood, not physically, but as morally impossible and unlawful; since, with the Jews, it was not lawful to eat the flesh of any creature alive, and much less the flesh of man; for the Jews understood Christ of a corporal eating of his flesh, being strangers to a figurative or spiritual eating of it by faith, in which sense he meant it.

Saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?] Which is to be understood, not physically, but as morally impossible and unlawful; since, with the Jews, it was not lawful to eat the flesh of any creature alive, and much less the flesh of man; for the Jews understood Christ of a corporal eating of his flesh, being strangers to a figurative or spiritual eating of it by faith, in which sense he meant it.

53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

Jesus said unto the Jews, who were litigating this point among themselves;

Verily, verily, I say unto you] Or you may assure yourselves of the truth of what follows,

Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you] By the Son of man, Christ means himself; under which title he often speaks of himself; because it was a title of the Messiah under the Old Testament; and was expressive of the truth of his human nature, though as attended with weakness and infirmities. The flesh and blood of Christ do not design those distinct parts of his body; much less as separate from each other; nor the whole body of Christ, but his whole human nature; or Christ, as having united a perfect human nature to him, in order to shed his blood for the remission of sin, and to offer up his soul and body a sacrifice for it: and the eating of these is not to be understood of a corporal eating of them, as the Capernaimites understood them; and since then the Papists, who affirm, that the bread and wine in the Lord's supper are transubstantiated into the very body and blood of Christ, and so eaten: but this is not to be understood of eating and drinking in the Lord's supper, which, as yet, was not instituted; and some, without participating of this, have spiritual life in them now, and will enjoy eternal life hereafter; and all that partake of that ordinance have not the one, nor shall have the other: and besides, having a principle of spiritual life in the soul, is previously necessary to a right eating of the supper of the Lord. These words, understood in this sense, once introduced infants to the Lord's supper; as a misinterpretation of *John* iii. 5. brought in the baptism of them. But the words design a spiritual eating of Christ by faith. To eat the flesh, and drink the blood of Christ, is to believe that Christ is come in the flesh, and is truly and really man; that his flesh is given for the life of his people, and his blood is shed for their sins, and this with some view and application to themselves: it is to partake of, and enjoy the several blessings of grace procured by him, such as redemption, pardon, peace, justification, &c. and such a feeding upon him as is attended with growth in grace, and in the knowledge of him, and is daily to be repeated, as our corporal food is, otherwise persons have no life in them: without this there is no evidence of life in them; not such live as feed on sinful pleasures, or on their own righteousness; only such that believe in Christ are living souls; and without this there is nothing to support life; every thing else that a man eats tends to death; but this is what will maintain and preserve a spiritual life; and without this there is no just expectation of eternal life; but where there is this, there

there is good reason to expect it, and such shall enjoy it: some copies and versions read, "ye shall not have life in you;" eternal life. Now, though the acts of eating and drinking do not give the right to eternal life, but the flesh, blood, and righteousness of Christ, which faith lays hold of, and feeds upon; yet it is by faith the right is claimed; and between these acts of faith, and eternal life, there is an inseparable connection.

54 Who so eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

Eateth and drinketh them spiritually by faith, as explained in the preceding verse:

Hath eternal life] The principle of spiritual life, which is evidently implanted in him, as appears from his eating and drinking; and is a durable and lasting principle: grace is an incorruptible seed; every part of it is abiding and permanent; and it is itself the beginning, pledge, and earnest of everlasting life, and is inseparably connected with it: moreover, such have eternal life itself, not only in Christ their head, but in themselves; they have a right unto it, and a meetness for it: and may be assured of it, as if they were personally possessed of it, from their election to it; the security of it in Christ; from the grace they have received, which is the beginning of glory; and the earnest of it in themselves:

And I will raise him up at the last day] To enjoy it in soul and body; see the notes on *. 39, 40.

55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

My flesh is meat indeed] Not in a corporal, but in a spiritual sense; and the same is said of his blood:

And my blood is drink indeed] That is, "they are both truly meat and drink," as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions render it; or "are true meat and drink," as the Arabic version: in opposition to what was typical meat and drink; as the manna in the wilderness, the water out of the rock, the flesh and wine at the passover, the meat and drink-offerings under the law, or any other meats and drinks under that dispensation; and which, though not when Christ said these words, yet now are abolished, being unprofitable, and not to be fed upon. Moreover, these phrases may denote the reality, substance, and solidity of that spiritual food believers have in Christ, in opposition to the imaginary food of sensual sinners, who feed on ashes and bread of deceit; and to that of self-righteous persons, who spend their labour and money for, and live upon that which is not bread, even upon their works of righteousness; and to the superficial tastes of hypocrites and for-

mal professors; and to the charge of enthusiasm; and even to the outward elements of bread and wine in the Lord's supper, since instituted; and as it may be attended upon by persons destitute of the grace of God. And these words may also be expressive of the virtue, efficacy, and excellency of this food, it being soul-quickening, nourishing, strengthening, satisfying, and delightful food, as well as spiritual and savory; not to carnal persons, or outward professors, but to new-born babes, and true believers; and which, by them, may be had, and to the full, and that in due season, even every day, and is what will abide for ever.

56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

He that eateth, &c.] In the sense above given; see the note on verse 53.

Dwelleth in me, and I in him] There is a mutual indwelling of Christ, and believers; Christ is the habitation, or dwelling-place of his people: there is a secret dwelling in Christ; so the elect of God dwelt in the heart, and in the hands and arms of Christ from everlasting; and as members in their head in election-grace; and representatively in him, as the mediator of the covenant; and they secretly and safely dwelt in him, when all mankind fell in Adam; and when he was on the cross, in the grave, and now he is in heaven; all which is owing to his own love, his Father's gift, and to secret union to him. But there is an open dwelling in him in time, which is here meant: God's elect, as in their nature-state, are without Christ, and lie open to the law and justice of God; the Spirit of God convinces them of this state, and directs them to flee to Christ, as a city of refuge; when they find him a stronghold, a place of defence, and a proper dwelling for them, where they resolve to abide, and do abide; and where they dwell safely, peaceably, comfortably, and pleasantly; and from which dwelling-place they will never be turned out. Likewise the saints are the habitation or dwelling-place of Christ; he dwells not in their heads and tongues, but in their hearts, and by faith; which is here expressed by *eating his flesh, and drinking his blood*; and which, though it is not the cause of Christ's dwelling here, yet is the means or instrument by which men receive him into their hearts, and retain him, and have communion with him: for he dwells in believers, not in such sense as he dwells in the world, by his omnipresence, and power; or as in the human nature, by hypostatical union to it; but by his Spirit, and by faith, which is an instance of wonderful condescending grace, and is owing to union to him, and is expressive of communion with him, and is what will continue for ever.

57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

As the living Father hath sent me] Sent me into the world, to be the Saviour of it; not by local motion, but by assumption of human nature; and not against his will, or as having superiority over him, but by joint consent and agreement: the first person in the Godhead is here styled, *the living Father*; not because he is the Father of spirits, of angels, and the souls of men; and the Father of all men by creation, and of saints by adoption; and the Father, or author of all mercies, spiritual and temporal; but because he is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and this character is peculiar to him: he is indeed the living God, and has life in himself, and is the fountain of life to others; but not in distinction from, and to the exclusion of the Son, or Spirit; but then none but he is the living Father, who ever did, and ever will, live as the Father of Christ:

And I live by the Father] Which is to be understood of Christ, not as God, but as mediator, and as man. As mediator he was set up by his Father, as the head of life to the elect; and was entrusted by him with a fulness of life for them; and was sent to open the way of life unto them, and bestow it on them. As man he had his human life from God, and was preserved and upheld in it by him; and he laid it down at his command, and at his death committed his soul or Spirit to him; and which was restored unto him, and is continued with him. The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read, "for the Father, or because of him;" and may design either that near union and conjunction of Christ with him, by virtue of which they live the same life; or else his living to the glory and honour of his Father, as he did, and does:

So he that eateth me] in a spiritual sense, by faith. The phrase of eating the Messiah was a familiar one, and well known to the Jews; though these Capernaïtes, cavilled at it, and called it an hard saying. "Says Rab, The Israelites shall eat the years of the Messiah: (the gloss on it is, The fulness which the Israelites shall have in those days.) Says R. Joseph, It is certainly so; but who shall eat him? Shall Chillek and Billek, "two judges in Sodom) אבלי לר "eat him?" "Contrary to the words of R. Hillel, who says, "Israel shall have no Messiah; for, אכלו "they eat him in the days of Hezekiah (b):" that is, they enjoyed him then; for he thought that Hezekiah was the Messiah; but that was the doctor's mistake. The Messiah now was, and to be enjoyed and

eaten by faith in a spiritual sense, and every one that does so,

Even he shall live by me] Such have their life from Christ; he is their food, on which they live; and by him they are continued, upheld, and preserved in their spiritual life, and are by him brought to the life of glory: or they live *for*, or *because* of him, as the above versions render it; they derive their life from him, and because he lives, they live also; and they live to his glory, and will do so to all eternity.

58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

This is that true bread, the bread of God, the bread of life, living bread; meaning himself, as in *ψ. 32, 33, 35, 48, 50, 51.*

Not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead] This is bread of a quite different nature from that; that was only typical bread, this true; that was the bread of angels, but this is the bread of God; that came but from the air, this from the third heaven; that men eat of, and died; but whoever eats of this, lives for ever; see *ψ. 49.* as follows:

He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever] See the note on *ψ. 51.*

59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

These things said he, &c.] Openly and publicly, in the place of divine worship, where the Jews resorted for that purpose:

As he taught in Capernaum] His own city, and where there was a synagogue, into which he often went and taught his doctrines, and wrought miracles; see *Matt. iii. 13.* and chap. viii. 5, 14. and ix. 1, 2. and xii. 9.

60 ¶ Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying: who can hear it?

Many of his disciples, &c.] Not of the twelve; nor of the seventy, but of the multitude of the disciples, who followed him from place to place, attended on his ministry, and might be baptized in his name; see *John iv. 1.*

When they had heard this] That his flesh and blood were truly and really meat and drink, and that none had life in them, or should have eternal life, but such as eat and drink the same:

Said, This is an hard saying] Or it is to be objected to; so אשכח "an hard thing," the word here used in the Syriac version, and אשכח "it is to me a hard thing;" are phrases used to express

prefs an objection in the Talmudic writings, where they are often met with: or it is difficult to be understood and received;” so הרבר הקשר, “an hard saying, or an hard cause;” is a cause difficult to be tried and determined, *Exodus* xviii. 26. and is used of that which seems incredible and absurd, and is surprising and unaccountable: so it is said (c), “R. Akiba saw his disciples look upon one another; and he said unto them, מה הרבר קשר, “Is this an hard saying with you?” Is it a difficult thing with you? Does it seem absurd to you? or are you surprised at it? Any thing difficult, or which seems irreconcilable, is so called: so the slaying the passover between the two evenings is called by Aben Ezra, in *Exodus* xii. 6. מלח קשר, “an hard saying.” In a like sense the phrase is used here; and the allusion may be to food that is hard of digestion, since Christ had been speaking of himself under the metaphors of bread and meat. As some of the doctrines of Christ are comparable to milk, which is easy of digestion; others are like to strong meat, which belongs to those of full age, and cannot be digested by children, by babes in Christ; and much less be received, eat, and digested, with ease and pleasure, by carnal minds; who therefore say, as these Capernaïtes did,

Who can bear it?] This saying, or doctrine, concerning eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of Christ; or him, Christ, who delivered this doctrine: such preaching, and such a preacher, are intolerable; there is no hearing, nor bearing them: hence we afterwards read, that these withdrew from the ministry of Christ, *John* 6. 66.

61 When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

When Jesus knew in himself] And of himself, without any intelligence from others, or hearing what was said, being the omniscient God;

That his disciples murmured at it] At the doctrine he had delivered, looking upon it as absurd, incredible, and contrary to sense and reason:

He said unto them, Doth this offend you?] Or trouble you? Cannot you get over this? Cannot you understand it? or account for it? If not, how will ye be able to digest some other things, or reconcile them to your minds, which are less known, and more unexpected, and will appear at first sight more surprising?

62 *What* and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

What and if ye shall see the Son of man] Meaning himself, then in a state of humiliation, and was

taken for a mere man; though the true Messiah, and Son of God:

Ascend up where he was before?] For Christ was, he existed before his incarnation, and he was in heaven before; not in his human nature, but as the Word and Son of God: and he intimates, that when he had done his work, and the will of his Father, for which he came down from heaven, by the assumption of the human nature, he should ascend up thither again; and which would be seen, as it was, by his apostles; and which would prove that he came down from heaven, as he had asserted; see *Eph.* iv. 9, 10. and that his flesh and blood were not to be eaten in a corporal sense; in which sense they understood him: and he hereby suggests, that if it was difficult to receive, and hard to be understood, and was surprising and incredible, that he should come down from heaven, as bread, to be eat and fed upon; it would be much more so to them to be told, that he, who was in so mean and lowly a form, should ascend up into heaven.

63 It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

It is the Spirit that quickeneth] It is the spirit of man that quickens him; or which being breathed into him, he becomes a living soul; for the body, without the spirit, is dead; it is a lifeless lump: and it is the Spirit of God that quickens dead sinners, by entering into them as the spirit of life, and causing them to live: and it is spiritual eating, or eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of Christ in a spiritual sense, which quickens, refreshes, and comforts the minds of believers; it is that by and on which they live, and by which their spiritual strength is renewed: unless, by *Spirit*, is meant the divine nature of Christ, by which he was quickened and raised from the dead, and ascended up into heaven, and was declared to be the Son of God with power:

The flesh profiteth nothing] The human nature of Christ, though profitable, as in union with the Son of God, to be given for the life of his people, and to be an offering, and a sacrifice for their sins, yet not as alone, or as abstracted from the divine nature; nor would his flesh and blood, corporally eaten, could or should it be done, be of any avail to eternal life; nor is any other flesh, literally understood, profitable of itself for life; for man lives not by bread, or meat, or flesh alone, but by the word and blessing of God upon it, and along with it; nor *flesh*, in a figurative sense, as creature-acts and performances, self-righteousness, obedience to the ceremonial law, carnal descent, and birth-privileges:

(c) *Misna Nidda*, c. 8. §. 3.

The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life] The doctrines which Christ had then been delivering concerning himself, his flesh and blood, being spiritually understood, are the means of quickening souls. The Gospel, and the truths of it, which are the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, are the means of conveying the Spirit of God, as a Spirit of illumination and sanctification, into the hearts of men, and of quickening sinners dead in trespasses and sins: the Gospel is the Spirit that giveth life, and is the favour of life unto life, when it comes not in word only, or in the bare ministry of it, but with the energy of the Holy Ghost, and the power of divine grace.

64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

Some believed not, notwithstanding the ministry they sat under, and the words they heard; for though they professed to believe in Jesus as the Messiah, yet they did not truly believe in him; their faith was not a living faith, or of a spiritual kind, but a mere historical and temporary one, and was feigned and hypocritical:

For Jesus knew from the beginning] Of his ministry, and of their profession of him, being God omniscient, and the searcher of hearts,

Who they were that believed not] That is, "believed not in him," as the Arabic version reads: notwithstanding their following him, and professing to believe in him, and the great outward respect and esteem they shewed to him, he could see through all those masks they put on, and knew they had no true faith of him in them; and the same knowledge he has of every professor of his name: he knows whether their faith is of the right kind or no; whether they have obtained the like precious faith with God's elect; or whether their profession is only a verbal one. In some copies it is read, "who they were that believed?" who were true believers, as well as who were hypocrites.

And who should betray him] He not only knew how it was with the multitude of the disciples that professed love to him, and faith in him; but he also particularly knew the case of the twelve apostles, and that one of him should betray him, and who he was. This was determined in the decrees of God, and was foretold in the prophecies of the Old Testament, and was predicted by Christ; and the person was pointed at by him before it was done.

65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

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And he said, &c.] Referring to v. 44. where the substance of what is here said is delivered; though the Ethiopic version reads, "therefore I say unto you," what follows:

That no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father] Which is the same, as to be drawn by the Father; for faith in Christ is the gift of God, and coming to him, is owing to efficacious grace, and is not the produce of man's power and free-will; see the note on v. 44.

66 ¶ From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

From that time, &c.] Not any of the twelve apostles, for they are distinguished from these in the next verse; nor any of the seventy disciples, for their names were written in heaven, and could not apostatize totally and finally, as these did; but some of the multitude of the disciples, who followed Christ, heard him, and professed to believe in him, and were baptized in his name, but were not true disciples, only nominal ones: they had never heard and learned of the Father, otherwise they would have known what it was to come to Christ, as the Father's gift, and under the drawings of his grace; and would not have been offended at the words of our Lord, just now spoken by him, concerning that sort of coming to him: but from the time he spoke those words; "because of this word," as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persian versions render it; they withdrew themselves from his ministry, they dropped their profession of faith in him, and relinquished him as a Saviour and Redeemer: for finding that he would not be made a king, nor set up for a temporal redeemer; and talking of himself as *the bread of life*, and *of coming to him*, in a sense they did not understand; they turned their backs on him; and as the words may be literally read, "returned to the things that were behind;" to the world, and to their old companions, to Satan and their own hearts lusts; *like the dog to its vomit, and the swine to its wallowing in the mire*: their true picture is drawn, in the parable of the unclean spirit going out of the man; and returning, *Matt. xii. 43.* And they returned to their quondam teachers, the scribes and Pharisees, and to the law of works, and to seek for righteousness by it; setting up their own righteousness, and not submitting to the righteousness of Christ; and thus to look back and draw back, is a sad case indeed.

And walked no more with him] Never returned to him more, nor went with him from place to place as before; never more attended on his ministry, nor had any intimacy and fellowship with him: and so it commonly is with apostates from the profession of Christ; they seldom or ever return, or

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are recovered; it is difficult, if not impossible, which is sometimes the case, to renew them again to repentance.

67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

Then said Jesus, &c.] "To his own twelve," as the *Perfic* version reads; that is, to his twelve apostles, whom he had chosen to that office: Christ takes no notice of those that went away from him, he shewed no concern about them; he knew what they were, that the truth of grace was not in them, and that they did not belong to him, and therefore was not uneasy about their departure; but turns himself to his apostles, whom he dearly loved, and in a very tender manner thus said to them,

Will ye also go away?] This he said, not as ignorant of what they were, or of what they would do in this case; he knew full well their faith in him, their love to him, and esteem of him, and close attachment to him, at least in eleven of them; nor did he say this, as having any fears or jealousies concerning them, by observing any thing in their countenances or gestures, which looked like a departure from him; but it was said out of a tender regard and strong affection for them: and it is, as if he should have said, "As for these men, that have walked with me for some time, and have now turned their backs upon me, it gives me no concern; but should you, my dear friends and companions, go also, it would give me, as man, real pain and great uneasiness:" or he might say this to shew, that as they were not pressed into his service, but willingly followed him, and became his disciples, being made a willing people by him in the day of his power on them; so they willingly continued with him, and abode by him; as also to strengthen their faith in him, and cause them the more to cleave to him, with full purpose of heart, when others left him; as well as to draw out from them, expressions of their regard for him, and faith in him; which end was answered.

68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

Then Simon Peter, &c.] Who was strong in the faith of Christ, and full of zeal for him, and love to him; and who was the mouth of the apostles, and always forward to speak, out of the abundance and sincerity of his heart, in their name; believing, that they all of them, for he had now no suspicion of Judas, no more than of the rest, had the same faith in Christ, love to him, and

esteem of him, as he himself had; wherefore, out of a good opinion of them, and love to Christ, he thus addressed him:

Lord] Or *my Lord*, as the *Syriac* version renders it; which was either a title of respect, and the same as *sir* with us; or else, as acknowledging the dominion and authority of Christ, as Lord of all, and especially of the saints, and as claiming his interest in him; and which carries in it a reason, why he should abide by him:

To whom shall we go?] As a teacher, whose ministry we can attend upon, to greater profit and advantage? Not to the scribes and Pharisees, whose leaven, or doctrine, Christ had bid them beware of; who taught for doctrines the commandments of men, and were blind leaders of the blind; nor to John the Baptist, who had declared he was not the Messiah; but had pointed him out to them in his person, as the Son of God; and in his office, as the Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of men; and perhaps, he might not be now living; and if he was, he would have encouraged them not to follow him, but abide with their master; so that there was no other, that was better, as Nonnus expresses it, that they could go unto; and therefore it would be folly and madness in them to leave him. And as it was with Peter and the rest of the disciples, so it is with all sensible sinners and true believers, who see there is no other to go to for life and salvation, but Christ; not to the law of Moses, which accuses, curses, and condemns, and by which, there is neither life nor righteousness; nor to any creature, or creature-performance, for there is a curse on him that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm; nor to their own righteousness, which is impure and imperfect, and cannot justify before God, nor answer for them in a time to come; nor to their tears of repentance, which will not satisfy the law, atone for sins, or wash them away; nor to carnal descent, birth-privileges, a religious education, sobriety, and civility; to trust to which, is to have confidence in the flesh, which will be of no avail; nor to ceremonial services, nor moral duties, nor even evangelical ordinances, neither of which can take away sin. There is no other Saviour but Christ to look to; no other Mediator between God and man, to make use of; no other physician, of value, for diseased and sin-sick souls to apply unto; no other fountain but his blood, for polluted souls to wash in, and be cleansed; no other city of refuge, or stronghold, for souls sensible of danger, to flee unto and be safe; no other to come to as the bread of life, where hungry souls may be fed; no other place of rest, for those that are weary and heavy laden; nor is there any other, where

there is plenty of all grace, and security from every enemy, as in him: and therefore, to whom can they have recourse, but unto him? and that for the following reason,

Thou hast the words of eternal life] Meaning, either the promises of eternal life, which were made before the world began, and were put into Christ's hands for his people, and are yea and amen in him; or the doctrines of eternal life; for so the Gospel, and the truths of it, are called, *Acts* v. 20. and that because the Gospel brings life and immortality to light, gives an account of eternal life; of the nature of it, that it is a glorious life, a life free from all the sorrows of the present one; a life of pleasure, and of perfect knowledge and holiness, and which will last for ever: and because it points out the way to it, that it is, not by the works of the law, but by the grace of God; that it is his free-gift, through Christ; and that Christ is *the way, the truth, and the life*, or the true way to eternal life: and because it is a means of quickening dead sinners, and of reviving true believers, and of nourishing them up unto everlasting life: or this phrase may design the power and authority which Christ has, to dispose of and dispense eternal life; for he has the thing itself in his hands, and a power to give it to as many as the Father has given him; and to them he does give it: and each of these senses carry in them a reason why souls should go to Christ, and to him only, for life and salvation.

69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

And we believe, &c.] Or know of a certainty: they believed upon the first call of them by Christ, and their following of him, that he was the true Messiah; and they came to an assurance of it, by the miracles he wrought, and by the doctrines which he taught; their faith, how weak soever it might be at first, rose up to a full assurance of faith, and of understanding; there was a reality and a certainty in it, as there is in all true faith, with respect to the object, though not always with respect to interest in it; which former was the case here, as appears by what follows:

That thou art that Christ] Or Messiah, that was promised by God of old, spoken of by the prophets, and expected by the Jews; that anointed prophet Moses had spoken of, that should arise out of Israel, like unto him; that anointed Priest, who, according to the oath of God, was to be a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek; and that anointed King, whom God has set over his holy hill of Zion:

The Son of the living God] This they knew, and were sure of, both by John's testimony, and by

the Father's voice from heaven; which three of them heard at Christ's transfiguration on the mount: God the Father is called *the living God*, though the Vulgate Latin version leaves out the word *living*; not to distinguish him from his Son; for he also is the living God; and is so called, *Heb.* iii. 12. but to distinguish him from the idols of the Gentiles, who have no life nor breath in them: and Christ is called the Son of the living God, as he is a divine person, as he is truly God; and to shew that he has the same life his Father has; being a partaker of the same nature and divine perfections: and this is another reason, why sensible souls will go to Christ, and no other; because he is the Messiah, the Saviour, and Redeemer, and an able one; and because he is God, and there is none else.

70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

Jesus answered them] The disciples, taking Peter's answer to this question as delivered in the name of them all, and as expressing their mind and sense:

Have not I chosen you twelve] Not to grace and glory, to holiness and happiness; though this was true of eleven of them, but to be apostles;

And one of you is a devil] Or like to one, is a deceiver, a liar, and a murderer, as the devil is from the beginning; all which Judas was, and appeared to be, in the betraying of his master. The Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, "is Saran;" which name, if given to Peter, as it once was on a certain occasion, *Matt.* xvi. 23. might very well be given to Judas; who, notwithstanding his profession of faith in Christ, was in the hands and kingdom of Satan, and under his influence and power: and this our Lord said, partly that they might not too much presume upon their faith and love, and steady attachment, and be overconfident of their standing; and partly, to prepare them for the apostacy of one from among them.

71 He spake of Judas Iscariot *the son of Simon*: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

These are the words of the Evangelist, pointing out the person Christ intended, lest any other should be suspected:

For he it was that should betray him] As it was determined and foretold, and which Christ knew full well, and therefore said the above words.

Being one of the twelve] Apostles, whom Christ had chosen, and which was an aggravation of his crime.

C H A P. VII.

In this chapter we find Jesus walking in Galilee, where his brethren ask him to go to the feast at Jerusalem, with his answer, v. 2—9. But afterwards goes privately, v. 10—13. and teacheth in the temple, justifying his doctrine, and the miracle which he wrought on the sabbath-day, v. 14—24. The several opinions of the people concerning Christ, v. 25—29. The chief priests and Pharisees lay snares to kill Christ, v. 30—32. Christ promiseth the Holy Ghost to believers, v. 33—39. The messengers that were sent for Christ, return without him, extolling his doctrine, v. 40—46. wherefore the Pharisees are at variance, v. 47—53.

AFTER these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

That is, after he had fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes, near Bethsaida; and had had that long discourse with the Jews at Capernaum, concerning himself, as the bread of life, and about eating his flesh, and drinking his blood; and had been up to the feast of the passover at Jerusalem, said to be *nigh*, when he went over the sea of Galilee, chapter vi. 4. otherwise the above places were in Galilee: but the case seems to be this, that after he had been at Capernaum, he went to Jerusalem to keep the passover; and finding that the Jews still sought to take away his life, he returned to Galilee, and walked there; he did not sit still, or lie at home, and live an inactive indolent life, but went about from place to place, preaching the Gospel, and healing diseases; he walked, and walked about; but not as the enemy of souls, seeking to do all mischief, but to do all good, to the bodies and souls of men:

For he would not walk in Jewry] In the land of Judea, where he had been, and tarried, and made disciples; but being rejected and ill-treated, he left them; which was a prelude of the Gospel being taken from them, and carried to another people; which afterwards took place, in the times of the apostles: his reason for it was,

Because the Jews sought to kill him] For healing a man on the sabbath-day, and for asserting his equality with God: not that he was afraid to die, but his time was not come; and he had work to do for the glory of God, and the good of men; and therefore it was both just and prudent to withdraw and preserve his life; for like reasons he advised his disciples, when persecuted in one city, to flee to another: and very lawful and advisable it is for good men, when their lives are in danger, to make use of proper means to preserve them, for

further usefulness in the cause of God, and for the benefit of men.

2 Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand.

Which feast began on the fifteenth day of the month Tisri, which answers to part of our September; when the Jews erected tents or booths, in which they dwelt and eat their meals during this festival; and which was done, in commemoration of the Israelites dwelling in booths in the wilderness; and was typical of Christ's tabernacling in human nature; and an emblem of the saints dwelling in the earthly houses and tabernacles of their bodies, in this their wilderness and pilgrimage-state. Some assign other reasons of this feast, as that it was appointed in commemoration of the divine command for building the tabernacle; and others, that it was instituted in memory of the protection of the people of Israel under the cloud, as they travelled through the wilderness; by which they were preserved, as in a tent or booth; and to this inclines the Targum of Onkelos, on *Levit. xxiii. 43.* which paraphrases the words thus: "That your generations may know, that in the shadow of the clouds I caused the children of Israel to dwell, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt." And one of the Jewish commentators (a) suggests, that the reason why the first place the Israelites pitched at, when they came out of Egypt, was called Succoth, which signifies tents, or tabernacles, is because there they were covered with the clouds of glory: but the true reason of this feast is, that which is first given, as is clear from *Levit. xxiii. 43.* and because they were obliged to dwell in tents, as soon as they came out of Egypt, therefore the first place they encamped at, was called Succoth, or tabernacles, *Exod. xii. 37. Numb. xxxiii. 5.* This feast was not kept at the time of year the people came out of Egypt; for that was at the time of the passover; but was put off, as it seems, to a colder season of the year; and which was not so convenient for dwelling in booths; lest it should be thought they observed this feast for the sake of pleasure and recreation, under the shade of these bowers, which, as appears from *Neh. viii. 15, 16.* were made of olive, pine, myrtle, and palm-branches, and branches of thick trees; and were fixed, some on the roofs of their houses, others in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God; and others in the streets: an account of the sacrifices offered at this feast, is given in *Numbers xxix. 13—38.* in which may be observed, that on the first day thirteen young bullocks were offered; on the se-

(a) Real Hattarim in Numb. xlii. 30.

cond, twelve; on the third, eleven; on the fourth, ten; on the fifth, nine; on the sixth, eight; and on the seventh, seven; and on the eighth, but one. The Jews in their *Misna*, have a treatise called *Succa*, or *the Tabernacle*, in which they treat of this feast; and which contains various traditions, concerning their booths, their manner of living in them, and other rites and usages observed by them, during this festival: they are very particular about the measure and form, and covering of their booths; a booth might not be higher than twenty cubits, nor lower than ten hands breadth; and its breadth, might not be less than seven hands breadth by seven; but it might be carried out as wide as they pleased (*b*), provided it had three sides: they might not cover their booths with any thing but what grew out of the earth, or was rooted up from thence; nor with any thing that received uncleanness, or was of an ill smell, or any thing that was fallen and faded (*c*): into these booths they brought their best goods, their best bedding, and all their drinking vessels, &c. and left their houses empty; for here was their fixed dwelling; they only occasionally went into their houses (*d*); for here they were obliged to dwell day and night, and eat all their meals, during the seven days of the feast; and however, it was reckoned praise-worthy, and he was accounted the most religious, who eat nothing out of his booth (*e*): they were indeed excused when it was rainy weather, but as soon as the rain was over, they were obliged to return again (*f*): and besides, their dwelling and sleeping, and eating and drinking in their booths, there were various other rites which were performed by them; as particularly, the carrying of palm-tree branches in their hands, or what they call the *Lulab*, which was made up of branches of palm-tree, myrtle, and willow, bound up together in a bundle, which was carried in the right hand, and a pomecitron in the left; and as they carried them, they waved them three times towards the several quarters of the world; and every day they went about the altar once, with these in their hands, saying the words in *Psalms* cxviii. 25. *Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity*: and on the seventh day, they went about the altar seven times (*g*): also there were great illuminations in the temple; at the going out of the first day of the feast, they went down to the court of the women; they made a great preparation, (that is, as Bartenora explains it, they set benches round it, and set the women above,

and the men below;) and there were golden candlesticks there, and at the head of them four golden basons, and four ladders to every candlestick; and four young priests had four pitchers of oil, that held a hundred and twenty logs, which they put into each bason; and of the old breeches and girdles of the priests, they made wicks, and with them lighted them; and there was not a court in Jerusalem, which was not lighted with that light; and religious men, and men of good works, danced before them, with lighted torches in their hands, singing songs and hymns of praise (*h*); and this continued the six nights following (*i*). There was also on every one of these days, another custom observed; which was that of fetching water from the pool of Siloah, and pouring it with wine upon the altar, which was attended with great rejoicing; of which, see the note on *Y. 37.* of this chapter. To which may be added, the music that was used during the performance of these rites; at the illumination in the court of the women, there were harps, psalteries, cymbals, and other instruments of music, playing all the while; and two priests with trumpets, who sounded, when they had the signal; and on every day, as they brought water from Siloah to the altar, they sounded with trumpets, and shouted; the great *Hallel*, or hymn, was sung all the eight days, and the pipe was blown, sometimes five days, and sometimes six (*k*); and even on all the eight days; and the whole was a feast of rejoicing, according to *Leviticus* xxiii. 40.

3 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.

[His brethren, &c.] That is, the brethren of Jesus, as the Syriac and Persian versions express it; who were not James and Joseph, and Simon and Judas, the sons of Alphaeus, the brother of Joseph, the husband of Mary, so called, *Matt.* xiii. 55; for some of these were of the number of the twelve; and all of them believers in Christ; whereas these his brethren were not. The Jew (*l*) therefore is mistaken, who supposed the above persons are here intended; and objects this their unbelief to Jesus, as if they knew him too well to give him any credit; whereas they did believe in him, and abode by him to the last; and some of them, if not all, suffered death for his sake. They therefore are here to be understood of some distant relations of Mary or Joseph, that dwelt at Nazareth, or Capernaum,

(b) *Misna Succa*, c. 1. §. 1. *Maimonides Hilchot Succa*, c. 4. §. 1. (c) *Misna* *ibid.* §. 4—6. *Maimonides* *ibid.* c. 5. §. 1, 2, &c. (d) *Maimonides* *ibid.* c. 6. §. 5. (e) *Misna* *ibid.* c. 2. §. 5, 6. *Maimonides* *ibid.* §. 6, 7. (f) *Maimonides* *ibid.* §. 10. (g) *Misna* *ibid.* c. 4. §. 1—5. *Maimonides Hilchot Lulab*, c. 7. §. 5, 6, 9, 23.

(h) *Misna* *ibid.* c. 5. §. 2—4. (i) *Maimonides* *ibid.* c. 5. §. 12. (k) *Misna* *ibid.* c. 4. §. 8, 9, & c. 5. §. 1, 4, 5, & *Erachin*, c. 2. §. 3. (l) *R. Isaac Chirshak Emunah*, par. 2. c. 45. p. 434, 435.

pernaum, or in some of those parts; and the feast of tabernacles being at hand, they put him upon going up to it, being willing to be rid of him: saying,

Depart hence] Which is the language of carnal men, who desire not the company of Christ, nor the knowledge of his ways; and, like the Gergesenes, who preferred their swine to Christ, and desired him to depart out of their coasts:

And go into Judea] Among his most inveterate enemies, who sought to take away his life; and which doubtless they knew; which shewed a quite different regard to him, from that of his true disciples, chapter xi. 7, 8. for which they give some plausible reasons:

That thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest] Meaning not his twelve disciples, who were now with him, but the disciples he had made and baptized in Judea, chapter iv. 1, 2. Or his disciples in the several parts of the land, who would all be at Jerusalem at the feast of tabernacles; and so, should he go, would have an opportunity of seeing his miracles, and thereby be the more confirmed in the faith of him.

4 For *there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly.* If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world.

In secret, for so they reckoned his doing miracles in such a corner of the land, and in so obscure a place as Galilee:

And he himself seeketh to be known openly] Suggesting hereby, that Christ was an ambitious person, and sought popular applause, and honour and glory from men, when nothing was more foreign from him; see chapter v. 41. and viii. 50.

If thou do these things] For they questioned whether the miracles he wrought were real; and suspected, that they were deceptions of the sight, and delusions; or at least they questioned their being done by him; and rather thought they were done by diabolical influence, by Beelzebub the prince of devils: but if they were real ones, they advise him, saying,

Shew thyself to the world] Or do these openly, and in the presence of the great men of the world; the princes of it, the rulers of the people, the chief priests and sanhedrim; and before all the males of Israel; who at this feast would come up from all parts of the land, and art, for their multitude, called *the world*: the reason of this their advice was, that if his miracles were real, and he was the person he would be thought to be, the doing of them before such, would gain him great

credit and esteem; and if not, he might be detected by such numbers, and by men of such penetration, as were among them.

5 For neither did his brethren believe in him.

At first his brethren might take to him, and embrace him as the Messiah, and expect he would set up a temporal kingdom; in which they might hope, on account of their relation to him according to the flesh, to enjoy great honours and privileges; but finding that he was not inclined to any thing of that nature, and talked in a quite different way, they grew sick of him, and rejected him as the Messiah: so, little regard is to be had, or confidence placed, in carnal descent from, or alliance to the best of men; as to Abraham, or any other true believer, if they have not the same grace, or the same faith as such have; and which comes not by blood, or natural generation, but by the free favour of God; for it matters not, if men have known Christ, or have been allied to him after the flesh, unless they are new creatures in him; they may be the one, and not the other; even the carnal brethren of Christ, and yet not believers in him; and it is only such who are so in a spiritual sense, that are regarded by him, *Matt. xii. 49, 50.*

6 Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready.

Then Jesus said, &c.] In answer to their solicitations and arguments used with him to go up to the feast:

My time is not yet come] Meaning, not the time of his death, or of his exaltation and glorification, or of the shewing of himself forth unto the world; though all this was true; but of his going up to this feast; as appears from *y. 8, y. 9.*

But your time is always ready] Intimating, they might go at any time; their lives were not in any danger, as his was, and had nothing to consult about the preservation of them; it was all one to them when they went up, whether before the feast, that they might be ready for it, or at the beginning, middle, or end of it, as to any notice that would be taken of them, unless they should be guilty of an omission of their duty; but not on any other account; which was not his case.

7 The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

Because they were of the world, and belonged to it; they were like unto it, and every like loves its like; and they were the world's own, and therefore instead of being hated, were loved by it; and they walked according to the course of it; and wicked

wicked men not only take pleasure in sin, but in them that do it:

But me it hateth] Though without a cause; that is, without a just cause, or reason; a cause there was, and it follows:

Because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil] Even those works of it, which were reckoned good works; Christ bore his testimony of these, that they were evil; being done either not according to the command of God, but the traditions of the elders; or not from a right principle, as of faith and love; nor to a right end, as the glory of God; but only to be seen of men: and very severely did he inveigh against the pride, covetousness, hypocrisy, and uncleanness of the scribes and Pharisees; and so he continued to do, and this drew upon him their hatred and ill-will.

8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come.

Go ye, &c.] Suggesting, that he would not have them stay for him, or hinder themselves on his account: he encourages them to go up, and observe this festival; for the ceremonial law was not yet abolished; and though they were carnal men, and did not understand what it typified: and so unregenerate persons ought to attend on the outward means, as the hearing of the word, &c. though they do not understand it; it may be God may make use of it for the enlightening of their minds; and blessed are they that wait at wisdom's gates, and there find Christ, and life and salvation by him:

I go not up yet unto this feast] This clause in one of Beza's copies is wholly left out; and in some, the word *this* is not read; and in others it is read, "I go not up unto this feast," leaving out the word *yet*; and so read the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; and the Persian version only, "I do not go up;" which occasioned Porphyry, that great enemy of Christianity, to reproach Christ, as guilty of inconsistency, or of an untruth, since he afterwards did go up: but in almost all the ancient copies the word is read; and so it is by Chrysostom and Nonnus; and to the same sense the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, "I do not go up now to this feast;" that is, just at that very time, that very day or hour: which is entirely consistent with what is afterwards said,

For my time is not yet full come] Not to die, or to be glorified, but to go up to the feast.

9 When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee.

When he had exhorted them to go up to the

feast, and told them that he should not go yet, and the reason of it:

He abode still in Galilee] And went not up with his brethren, nor at all at present; shewing hereby a firmness and resolution of mind, not using lightness of speech; and his words being not yea and nay, but all of a piece, and by which he abode.

10 But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

But when his brethren were gone up to the feast, as all the Oriental versions read, from the next clause:

Then went he also up unto the feast] The Ethiopic version reads, "he went up that day;" which is very likely, and no ways contrary to what is said in *John* 14. for though he did not go up to the temple to teach, till the middle of the feast, he might be up at the feast sooner: and according to the law, it was necessary that he should be there on the first and second days, and keep the *Chagigah*, and make his appearance in the court; though there was a provision made for such that failed, the canon runs thus (a): "He that does not make his festival sacrifice on the first good day of the feast, may make it throughout the whole feast, and on the last good day of the feast; and if the feast passes, and he has not made the festival sacrifice, he is not obliged to a compensation; and of this it is said, *Ezekiel* 1. 15. *That which is crooked cannot be made straight*," &c. But however, whatever day he went on, he went up

Not openly, but as it were in secret] As he was made under the law, and came to fulfil all righteousness, it was necessary he should observe every precept, and fulfil the whole law; and therefore he went up to this feast; yet in the most private manner, that he might escape those who would lie in wait for him, and sought to kill him: and this he did, not through fear of death, but because his *hour was not yet come*; this was not the feast he was to suffer at, but the passover following; which when near at hand, he went up to it, and entered Jerusalem in the most public manner.

11 ¶ Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?

The Jews sought him, some to take him and kill him, and others to hear his doctrine, and see his miracles; for all expected him at the feast, knowing it was always his custom, as it was his duty, as an Israelite, to attend at it:

And

(a) *Misna Chagiga*, c. 1. §. 6. *Maimonides Hilchet Chagiga*, c. 2. §. 4—7.

And said, Where is he?] Not naming his name; either through contempt, which might be the case of the far greater part; or through fear of the Jews; or because that he was so well known.

12 And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.

There was a general whisper, and a private controversy and contention among the people about him, upon inquiry being made after him:

For some said, He is a good man] A man of a good principle, of a good life and conversation; and who is good, kind, and beneficent, both to the bodies and souls of men; preaches good doctrine, and does many good things:

Others said, Nay] Or denied him to be a good man:

But he deceiveth the people] Drawing them off from the law of Moses, teaching them to break the sabbath, setting himself up for the Messiah, and asserting himself to be the Son of God.

13 Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.

No man spoke so loud as to be overheard, at least by many, but in a secret and whispering way; or they did not speak with freedom, or all their mind, what they really thought of him, nor with courage and boldness,

For fear of the Jews] For fear of being mobbed by them, or taken up and prosecuted, or turned out of the synagogue; for a law was made, that whoever confessed him should be so used; and this deterred persons from expressing the true sentiments of their minds about him.

14 ¶ Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.

About the fourth day of it, for it lasted eight days; this might be on the sabbath-day, which sometimes was *מִן הַיּוֹם* "in the middle of the feast (n)," and the rather, since it follows,

Jesus went up into the temple] As the Lord and proprietor of it, and as was his usual method; he had for some reasons kept himself retired till now, and now he appeared publicly,

And taught] The people his doctrine; he expounded the scriptures, gave the true sense of them, and instructed the people out of them.

15 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

And the Jews marvelled] Both at the matter, and manner of his doctrine; it was such as never man spake; his words were so gracious, and there were such truth and evidence in them, and they were delivered with such power and authority, that they were astonished at them:

Saying, How knoweth this man letters?] Or "the scriptures," as the Arabic and Persic versions render it; which are called *holy letters*, 2 Tim. iii. 15. according to which, the sense is; that they were surprised at his knowledge of the scriptures, that he should be conversant with them, and be able to interpret them, and give the sense and meaning of them, in so full and clear a manner, as he did: or else the sense is, How came this man to be such a learned man? Whence has he this wisdom, and all this learning which he shews? As in Matt. xiii. 54. So a learned man is in *Isai. xxix. 11.* said to be one that, *יָדַע הַסֵּתֶר* "knows letters;" as the Septuagint there translate the Hebrew text; but how Christ should know them, or be a learned man,

Having never learned?] This was surprising to them: that is, he had not had a liberal education, but was brought up to a trade; he was not trained up at the feet of any of their Rabbins, in any of their universities, or schools of learning; and in which they were certainly right. Modern Jews pretend to say he had a master, whom they sometimes call *Elchanan* (o); but most commonly they make him to be *R. Joshua ben Perachiah* (p); with whom they say, he fled into Alexandria in Egypt, for fear of Jannai the king; and one of their writers (q), on this account, charges the Evangelist with a falsehood: but who are we to believe, the Jews who lived at the same time with Jesus, and knew his education and manner of life, or those that have lived ages since?

16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

Jesus answered them, &c.] Having heard them express their surprise, and state their objection:

My doctrine is not mine] It was his, as he was God; as such, he was the author of it; it was from him, by the revelation of him; and it was of him, as he was the subject of it, as Mediator; it respected his person as God-man, his offices, as Prophet, Priest, and King; and his grace, righteousness, and salvation; and it was his, as preached by him as man; it came by him, and first began to be spoken by him; and was so spoken by him, as it never was before, or since: but it was not

(o) Toldos Jesu, p. 5.

(p) Juchasin, fol. 139. 1. Gaba

Tz. mach David, par. 1, fol. 21. 1. & 24.

(q) R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2, c. 46. p. 435.

(n) Min, Succa, c. 5. §. 5.

not human; it was not acquired by him, as man; he did not learn it of man; he needed no human teachings; he increased in wisdom without them, from his infancy: they said right, in saying he had never learned; the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge rested on him, and the treasures of them were hid in him; nor was it a device or invention of his, as man; it was not from himself as such, but it was from heaven, from his Father: wherefore he adds,

But his that sent me] Thereby intimating, that it was of God, and was communicated to him by his Father; from whom he received it, and from whom he had a commission to preach it; so that his doctrine was that wisdom which comes from above, and is pure and peaceable, divine and heavenly, and ought to be received by men.

17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

If any man will do his will] Meaning, by any man, not one that perfectly fulfils the law, which is the good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God; for there is no man that does this, or can do it; nor is it so said here, if any man do his will, but, if any man will do it; that is, is desirous of doing it; who has it wrought in him both to will and to do, of the good pleasure of God, by his grace and Spirit; with whom to will is present, though he has not power to perform, and so is a spiritual man; and who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, which is one branch of the will of God; and who depends upon the Spirit and grace of God, and acts from a principle of love to God, and in the exercise of faith on Christ:

He shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself] Not a man of mere natural knowledge and learning, or a man of theory and speculation, is a judge of doctrine; but he that leans not to his own understanding, and implores the assistance of the divine Spirit, and who is for reducing doctrine into practice: he knows by the efficacy of the doctrine upon his heart, and the influence it has on his life and conversation; by its coming not in word only, but in power; and by its working effectually in him, whether it is divine or human, of God or of man.

18 He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

He that speaketh of himself, &c.] That speaketh what he himself has devised, and is a scheme of

his own; for which he has no divine warrant and commission,

Seeketh his own glory] Honour and applause from men; as did the scribes and Pharisees, who taught for doctrines the commandments of men, the traditions of the elders, their own glosses upon the law, and their own decisions and determinations; and as did the false teachers, who had nothing else in view but themselves, their worldly interest, or vain-glory; these suited their doctrines to the minds and lusts of men, in order to gain their point:

But he that seeketh his glory that sent him] That gave him in commission what he should say and speak, and his only; as did Christ, and so his apostles after him:

The same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him] He is an upright and faithful man, and what he says is truth; he brings true doctrine along with him, and there is no fraud or imposture in him; nor any "insincerity in his heart," as the Syriac and Persian versions render it; nor any dishonesty in his conduct; he is no cheat or deceiver; was he, he would seek his own glory and interest; but as he appears to be a man of no ill design, his doctrine is to be depended on and received; and such was Christ.

19 Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

Did not Moses give you the law] After Christ had vindicated himself and his doctrine, he proceeds to reprove the Jews for their breaking the law of Moses, which contained the will of God; by which it appeared that they were no proper judges of his doctrine, though they cavilled at it; the question he puts, could not be denied by them; for though, properly speaking, God was the lawgiver, yet inasmuch as it was delivered by Moses, it is ascribed to him, and said to come by him; and it was put into his hands, to be delivered by him peculiarly to the people of Israel; and being given to the Jewish fathers, not only for themselves, but for their posterity in ages to come, is said to be given to the then present generation; and may be understood either of the whole system of laws, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, belonging to that people; or else of the particular law concerning the keeping of the sabbath, which was a peculiar law of Moses, and proper to the children of Israel only:

And yet none of you keepeth the law] Though they boasted of it as a singular privilege, and rested in it and their obedience to it for life and salvation, yet they daily broke it in various instances, in thought, word, or deed; yea, those that sat in Moses's chair, and taught it, did not observe and

do what they taught; nor could the most holy and righteous man among them perfectly keep it; and many of them, who were most forward to censure others for the violation of it, paid the least regard to it; and particularly to the law of the sabbath, which both priests and people transgressed, in one point or another, every sabbath-day: wherefore our Lord reasons with them,

Why go ye about to kill me?] An harmless and innocent man, who never injured you in your persons or properties; and which is a proof of their not keeping that body of laws Moses gave them, since, *Thou shalt not kill*, is one of them: though rather this may refer to the law of the sabbath, and the sense be, that since Moses had given them the law of the sabbath, and they did not keep it themselves, why should they seek to take away his life, for what they pretended was a breach of it? For our Lord here, as appears by what follows, refers to what they sought to do, above a year and a half ago, and still continued to seek after; namely, to kill him, because he had healed a man on the sabbath-day, chapter v. 16, 18. and vii. 1.

20 The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?

The people answered, &c.] These seem to be the country people, who came from Galilee and other parts, who knew nothing of the designs of the Jerusalem-Jews upon him; nor were they his downright enemies, at least, but rather seemed to favour him, and were on his side, though greatly provoked to hear him talk after this manner:

Thou hast a devil] Or art possessed with one; thou talkest like one of the demoniacs, like a madman, one beside thyself; whom the devil has so much power over, and has so deprived of thy senses, that thou knowest not what thou sayest:

Who goeth about to kill thee?] No man; for they could not believe that any man, or body of men, would be so wicked, as to attempt to take away the life of so harmless a person, and who did so much good both to the bodies and souls of men.

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel.

Jesus said unto them, &c.] Taking no notice of their passion, reproach, and blasphemy; but proceeding upon the thing he had in view, and which he was determined to reassume, and vindicate himself in:

I have done one work] That is, on the sabbath-day; meaning, his cure of the man that had had a disorder eight and thirty years, who lay at Bethesda's pool; which single action, they charged with being a breach of the sabbath, he mentions

with a view to their many, and daily violations of it:

And ye all marvel] At it, as a thing unheard of, as a most shocking piece of iniquity, as an intolerable evil; wondering that any man should have the front, to bid another take up his bed and walk on the sabbath-day: they did not marvel at the miracle that was wrought; but were amazed, offended, and disturbed, at its being done on the sabbath-day.

22 Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath-day circumcise a man.

Moses gave the command of circumcision, which he renewed and established, *Lev. xii. 3.*

Not because it is of Moses] That is, originally, or that he was the first giver of it, for it was enjoined before his time; this is a correction of what is before-said, giving a more accurate account of the rise of circumcision:

But of the fathers] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to whom it was enjoined by God, and who practised it before the times of Moses; so that this command was in force before him, and obligatory upon the descendants of Abraham, before he delivered it; and would have been, if he had never mentioned it; though the Jews say (r), "We do not circumcise because Abraham our father, on whom be peace, circumcised himself and his household, but because the holy blessed God commanded us by Moses, that we should be circumcised, as Abraham our father was circumcised." But no doubt it would have been binding on them, if Moses had said nothing about it; the command to Abraham is so express, for the circumcision of his male offspring, *Gen. xvii. 10—12.* however, it being both of Moses and of the fathers, laid a very great obligation on the Jews to observe it:

And ye on the sabbath-day circumcise a man] A male child, as they did, when the eighth day fell on a sabbath-day; for the law of circumcision, was before the law of the sabbath, and therefore was not to be made void by it, nor was it made void by it; and so much is intimated by our Lord's observing, that it was not of Moses, but of the fathers; and this is the reason which the Karaite Jews give for circumcision on the sabbath-day: for (s), "Say they, because it is a for command, from the time of Abraham our father, on whom be peace, before the giving of the law of the sabbath, *וְאַתָּה אֵלֹהֵינוּ* they circumcise on the sabbath-day;" and "when

(r) Maimon. in *Mishn. Cholin*, c. 7. §. 6. (s) R. Elisha in *Addit. apud Triglani. de Sect. Karaeorum*, c. 9. p. 134.

“when the command of the sabbath afterwards took place, it was not possible it should disannul circumcision on the sabbath-day; and for the same reason, they also allow the sacrifice of the passover to be done on the sabbath-day, because it is a command which went before the command of the sabbath.” And this was also the sense and practice of the other Jews: thus citing the law of Moses in *Lev. xii. 3. And in the eighth day, the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised*; by way of gloss upon it add, ואמרו בשבת “and even on the sabbath-day (r);” and on the same text another writer observes (u), that by gematry, every day is fit for circumcision. R. Jose says (w), “They do all things necessary to circumcision on the sabbath-day.” R. Akiba says (x), “All work that can be done on the evening of the sabbath, does not drive away the sabbath; but circumcision, which cannot be done on the evening of the sabbath, drives away the sabbath: they do all things necessary to circumcision; they circumcise, and make bare, and suck, and put (on the wound) a plaister and cummin; and which, if not bruised on the evening of the sabbath, they may chew with their teeth.”—Also it is allowed of (y), to “wash the infant on the third day of circumcision, which happens to be on the sabbath.” Moreover, a case is put after this manner (z); “If a man has two infants, one to be circumcised after the sabbath and the other to be circumcised on the sabbath, and forgets, and circumcises that, that was to be after the sabbath, on the sabbath, he is guilty of sin; if one is to be circumcised in the evening of the sabbath, and the other on the sabbath, and he forgets, and circumcises that which should be on the evening of the sabbath, on the sabbath, R. Eliezer pronounces him guilty; but R. Joshua absolves him.” And we have an instance (a) of “R. Shephana, the son of R. Samuel bar Abdimo, that when he was to be circumcised, it was the sabbath-day, and they forgot the razor; and they inquired of R. Meni and R. Isaac ben Eleazar, and it was drove off to another day.” From all which it appears, that circumcision on the sabbath-day was a common practice, and which confirms the assertion of Christ.

23 If a man on the sabbath-day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because

I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath-day?

If a man on the sabbath-day receive circumcision] As it was certain in many instances, he did:

That the law of Moses might not be broken] Either the law concerning circumcision, which confirmed the law given to Abraham, and required it should be on the eighth day, let it fall when it would, even on a sabbath-day; and therefore on that day male children received circumcision, that the law might be kept, and not be broken: or else the law concerning the sabbath; and the sense be, if circumcision was administered on the sabbath-day, “without breaking the law of Moses,” as some render the words, which commanded the observation of the sabbath,

Are ye angry at me] And pursue me with so much wrath and bitterness,

Because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath-day? Or “a man that was whole, found on the sabbath-day;” who was wholly, or all over disordered, every limb of whom shook with the palsy: or, as some think, the sense is, he was made every whit whole, both in soul and body; and then the argument is, if it was no breach of the sabbath to make a wound, and lay a plaister on it, as in circumcision; it would be no violation of it, nor ought any to be offended with it; that Christ should heal a diseased man, who was so in every part of his body, and restore health to his soul likewise: and nothing is more common with the Jews than to say, “The danger of life, and ווארמפן “the preservation of the soul, or life, drive away the sabbath (b).”

24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

Judge not according to the appearance] Judge not through respect of persons, and so as to please men, the scribes and Pharisees; who had condemned the action of Christ, in curing the diseased man on the sabbath-day, and sought to kill him for it:

But judge righteous judgment] Give your sense and judgment of things, according to the truth and evidence of them; and do not find fault with that which you yourselves allow of, and which Moses and his law, and your own practices justify.

25 Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill?

Then said some of them of Jerusalem] Some who were inhabitants of Jerusalem, and so are distinguished from the people, *John. 8. 20.* who came up out of the country to the feast; so Jose ben Joehanan

(r) T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 132. 1. Mitzvot Torā, pr. Affirm. 28.

(u) Baal Haturim in *Lev. xii. 3.* (w) Misna Sabbat, c. 18. §. 3.

(x) Ibid. c. 19. §. 1, 2. T. Bab. Pefachim, fol. 69. 2. Maimon. *Hilchot Milah*, c. 2. §. 6, 7.

(y) Ibid. §. 3. *Perehit Rabba*, §. 8. fol. 70. 3. Maimon. *ibid.* §. 8.

(z) Ibid. §. 4. T. Bab. *Ceritot*, fol. 19. 2. (a) *Juchasin*, fol. 105. 2.

(b) T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 132. 1.

is called, *איש ירושלם* "a man of Jerusalem (c);" that is, an inhabitant of it: now these men living in the city, knew more of the temper and disposition, the designs and attempts, of the chief priests, scribes, and elders, to take away the life of Christ; and therefore say,

Is not this he whom they seek to kill? They knew that they had formed a design to kill him, ever since the passover before the last; when he wrought the miracle referred to in the text, and that they had been ever since plotting against his life, and were now at this feast seeking an opportunity to lay hold on him and kill him.

26 But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?

He speaketh boldly] And with great freedom, and openly and publicly in the temple, as if he had a licence from the chief priests for so doing:

And they say nothing to him] They do not contradict him, or forbid him speaking; he goes on without controul; though he takes great liberty in charging the Jews with an intention to kill him; in arguing from their practices in vindication of himself, and in suggesting that they judged in favour of men, and not according to the truth of things.

Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?] Have they changed their minds concerning him, and so their conduct towards him? Are they convinced, and do they know by plain demonstrations, and full proof, that he is really the Messiah that has been promised of old, and long expected?

27 Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.

Howbeit we know this man whence he is] They signify, that if the rulers had altered their minds, and had gone into the belief of Jesus of Nazareth being the Messiah, they should not follow them in it, for this reason; because they knew from whence he came; meaning not so much the place of his birth, which they supposed was Galilee, and Nazareth in Galilee, in which they were mistaken, as the manner of his birth, which they could account for: they pretended to know his extract, that he was the son of Joseph and Mary, that he was begotten in wedlock, and was born as other persons are; there was no difficulty with them in accounting for his coming into the world, no more than any other ordinary person; his descent from Joseph and Mary was well known to them, and to

be accounted for in a rational way, and therefore concluded he could not be the Messiah:

But when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is] They knew the place from whence he was to come; so the chief priests and scribes did, *Matthew ii. 4, 5*; and so did these Jews, *y. 42*. They knew he would come from Bethlehem, and they knew that he would come out of the seed of David; but then he was to be born of a virgin, according to *Isaiah vii. 14*. and such a coming into the world was not to be known, reasoned upon, and accounted for: wherefore since Jesus, according to the notion of these men, came into the world in the common and ordinary way, they thought they had an invincible argument against his being the Messiah; and therefore, let the rulers do what they would, for their parts, they were determined to reject him: and because it could not be known from whence the Messiah should come; hence the ancient Jews used to call him "the seed" "which comes from another place;" not from the place from whence seed ordinarily comes, from the loins of men, but from some other place, they knew not where: their words are very remarkable on that passage in *Genesis iv. 25*. *And she called his name Seth, for God hath appointed me another seed, &c.* This observation is made by R. Tanchuma, in the name of R. Samuel (d); says he, "She has respect to that seed, which is he that comes, *ממקום אחר* "from another place." And what "is this? This is the King Messiah." And elsewhere (e), the same Rabbi observes on those words in *Genesis xix. 32*. "That we may preserve seed of our father: it is not written, *That we may preserve a son of our father*, but *that we may preserve seed of our father*; that seed which is he that comes "from another place." And what is "this? This is the King Messiah." The modern Jews (f) endeavour to explain away the sense of this phrase, *another seed*, as if it regarded strange seed; and that the sense of the expression is only, that the Messiah should spring from the family of Moab, and from Ruth the Moabitess: nor is their sense what Aquinas (g) attributes to the Jewish Rabbins, "That the more noble part of that mass of which Adam was made, remained untouched (by sin,) and was afterwards transfused into Seth; and so through all descending from him, unto Joakim, or Eliakim, or Heli, the father of the virgin, out of which the body of the blessed virgin was made:" Which is no other than a Popish device, fathered upon the Jews, and made for

(d) *Beresheet Rabba*, §. 23. fol. 20. 4. *Midrash Ruth*, fol. 36. 1.

(e) *Beresheet Rabba*, §. 51. fol. 46. 1. *Midrash Ruth*, fol. 35. 4.

(f) *Mattanot Cehunah & Jade Mofeh in Thid*.

(g) In 3 sent. distinct. 3. art. 2.

(c) *Piske Abot*, c. 1. §. 4. 5.

for the sake of the virgin Mary, rather than for the sake of Christ. But their meaning is, That Christ should not be begotten of man, or come into the world in the ordinary way of generation, but should be born of a virgin; and so it could not be known, and accounted for from whence he was, or from whence that seed was of which he was made. The angel gives the best account of this in *Luke i. 35*. A body was prepared for Christ by the Lord; it was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost; his birth of a virgin was miraculous; it is beyond the comprehension of men, and cannot be explained by any mortal; from whence he is it cannot be said; no man can be pointed to as his father; all that can be said is, he was made of a woman, a virgin.

28 Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am; and I am not come of myself; but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.

Then cried Jesus, &c.] Overhearing the reasonings of these men, or however, knowing what they said; so the *Perfic* version adds, "having secretly known this;" exalted his voice as he was teaching in the temple, and in the midst of his discourse, publicly before all the people, in the temple, spoke out with a loud voice, that all might hear:

Saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am.] Some, as the *Ethiopic* version, read these words by way of interrogation, "Do ye both know me?" and "Do ye know from whence I am?" No; you do not. Or they may be considered as an ironical concession; "Yes, you know me, and you know whence I am; you know me to be Jesus of Nazareth; but you are wrong, I am not of Nazareth: you suppose I come from Galilee, but that is your ignorance; you take me to be the real son of Joseph, to be begotten by him on Mary, but that is your mistake: such is your knowledge of me; you know me indeed who I am, and from whence I come."

And I am not come of myself.] Into this world, by incarnation, or the assumption of human nature, to work out the salvation of men: the Father called him to it, and he agreeing to do it, was in the fulness of time sent about it; this was not a device of his own, or an honour he took to himself; he was not alone in it; it was a mutual agreement between him and his Father, in consequence of which he was sent, and came.

But he that sent me is true.] To the covenant he made with Christ, and to the promises he made to the Fathers of the Old Testament, concerning the

mission of his Son; and he is true to be believed, in the testimonies he gave of him, particularly by a voice from heaven, declaring him his beloved Son.

Whom ye know not.] So that notwithstanding all their boasted knowledge of him, they knew not his Father, from whence he came, and by whom he was sent; and notwithstanding also their boasted knowledge of the one, only, true, and living God, see *Rom. ii. 17*. yet they knew him not in a spiritual sense; they knew him not in Christ, nor as the Father of Christ; they knew neither the Father nor the Son: and this their ignorance of both was the reason of their hatred of Christ, and of his followers, *John xv. 21*. and chap. *xvi. 3*.

29 But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

But I know him.] His nature and perfections, his purposes and promises, his counsel and covenant, his mind and will; and indeed none knows him but he, and those to whom he pleases to reveal him; and there is good reason why he should have intimate and perfect knowledge of him:

For I am from him.] Being the only-begotten of him, and as such lay in his bosom, and knew him, and his whole heart, and was privy to all of him, and that that is within him:

And he hath sent me.] In an office-capacity to redeem his people. This is the original descent of Christ, which the Jews knew not, though they pretended to know him, and whence he was.

30 ¶ Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

Then they sought to take him.] By force, and carry him before the sanhedrim, in order to be tried and condemned as a blasphemer; being enraged to hear him claim a descent from God, whom they took to be a mere man, the son of Joseph the carpenter:

But no man laid hands on him.] Though they had a good-will to it, they had no power to do it, being restrained by the secret providence of God from it, and awed by the majesty of Christ, which shewed itself in his looks and words; and perhaps also they might be afraid of the people, lest they should rise in his favour; and so every man being fearful of being the first that should seize him, no man did: however, so it was ordered by divine providence, that he should not be apprehended at this time,

Because his hour was not yet come.] To suffer and die, to depart out of this world, and go to the Father: there was a precise time fixed for this in the counsel and covenant of God, by mutual compact, called *due time*; as his coming into the world

world is called *the fulness of time*: nor could he die before that time, and therefore no man was suffered to lay hands on him, whatever good-will he had to it. And there is a time for every man's death; nor can any man die before that time, or live beyond it: see *Ecc. iii. 2. Job xiv. 5.* and this is the sense of the ancient Jews; for they say (*b*), "A man before his years, or his time, does not die;" that is, before he comes to the years appointed for him: and they ask (*i*), "Who is there that goes before his time? that is, dies before his time?" And it is said (*k*) of a certain person who was in his house, "And *וְיָמָיו כְּיָמָיו*" "his time was come," and he died without sickness: though it must be owned some of them were otherwise minded, and say (*l*), that death, by the hand of heaven, or God, shortens a man's years; and that there are some reasons for which righteous men depart out of this world before their time is come; and particularly of Enoch, they say, "God took him before his time was come (*m*)."

31 And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?

And many, &c.] Whilst some were displeased at his doctrine, others were induced by his miracles to believe on him, as an extraordinary person, if not the Messiah; and these were the common people, especially those that came out of the country; for the city Jews, and above all the rulers, were very averse to him: and it is easy to observe, that faith in Christ, and true religion, spread and flourish most among the meaner sort of people.

And said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?] Referring not so much to the miracles many of them might have seen done by him in other parts of Judea, and in Galilee; nor only to those he had done in the preceding feasts at Jerusalem, but to those that were done by him now, though not recorded by the Evangelist. The Jews expected many miracles to be wrought by the Messiah when he came, and they had good reason for it from *Isa. xxxv. 5, 6.* To these Christ sends John the Baptist, and the Jews, for proofs of his being the Messiah, *Matt. xi. 4. John x. 37, 38.* and by these he was approved of God as such, *Acts ii. 23.* And it is certain that the Jews expected miracles in the days of the Messiah. "Says R. Simeon to Eleazar his son, Eleazar, at the time that the king Messiah is raised up, how many signs and other

wonders will be done in the world? A little after from that day all the signs, and wonders, and mighty works, which the holy blessed God did in Egypt, he will do to the Israelites, as it is said, *Micah vii. 15. According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt, will I show unto him marvellous things (n).*" So the Targumist on *Isaiah liii. 8.* paraphrases thus, "From afflictions and punishment he will deliver our captivity; and the wonderful things which shall be done for us in his days, who can tell?" It is true indeed that the modern Jews have laid aside such expectations, and pretend they were not looked for formerly. Maimonides says (*o*), "Let it not enter into thy heart, that the king Messiah hath need to do signs and wonders; (as that he shall renew things in the world, or raise the dead, and the like; these are things which fools speak of) the thing is not so." And he instances in Ben Coziba, who set up for the Messiah, of whom R. Akiba, and the rest of the wise men of that age, did not require a sign, or miracle; yet this same writer elsewhere says (*p*), "That all nations shall make peace with the Messiah, and serve him, because of his great righteousness, and the miracles which shall be done by him."

32 The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.

The Pharisees heard, &c.] Or whispered, privately talked among themselves:

Such things concerning him] As that surely he must be the Messiah, since such wonderful things were done by him, and might also express some uneasiness and surprise, that the rulers did not receive him as such:

And the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him] And bring him before the sanhedrim, by them to be condemned, and so a stop to be put to the peoples receiving him, and believing in him as the Messiah; fearing, that should things go on at this rate, their principles and practices would be rejected, and their persons and authority be brought into contempt.

33 ¶ Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me.

Then said Jesus, &c.] To the officers that were sent to take him, and other unbelieving Jews that were about him:

(b) T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 114. 2. & Sanhedrim, fol. 29. 1. & Bava Metsia, fol. 85. 1. (i) T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 4. 2. (d) Zohar in Exod. fol. 71. 4. (f) Piske Tosephot Sabbath, ant. 113. (m) Zohar in Exod. fol. 4. 4.

(n) Ibid. fol. 3. 4. & 4. 2.

(o) Hilchot Melachim, c. 11. §. 3.

(p) In Misna Sanhedrim, c. 31. §. 1.

Yet a little while am I with you] No longer than till the next passover, which was but about half a year at most: this he might say, partly to quicken the attention of the people to him, to make the best use and improvement of his ministry whilst they had it, since in a little time he would be removed from them; and partly to suggest to the officers that were sent to take him, that they, and their masters, need not have given themselves that trouble, for in a short time he should be gone from them, and till that time he should continue in spite of them.

And then I go unto him that sent me] Still confirming his mission from God, expressing his death by going, and as being voluntary, and signifying his glory and happiness after it.

34 Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come.

Ye shall seek me] That is, the Messiah, who he was; meaning, that after his departure they should be in great distress, and be very much on the inquiry after, and solicitous for the coming of the Messiah, to be a redeemer and deliverer of them out of their troubles:

And shall not find me] No Messiah will appear, no Saviour will be sent, no Redeemer will come to relieve them; they shall inquire, and look for one in vain, as they did.

And where I am, thither ye cannot come] Intimating hereby, that not only their temporal estate and condition would be very distressed and miserable, but also their eternal estate; since they should not be able to come where he would be in his human nature, and where he now was, as a divine person, namely, in heaven.

35 Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?

Then said the Jews, &c.] That is, the unbelieving, scoffing Jews; it may be the officers, at least some of them, that were sent to take him:

Whither will he go that we shall not find him] What distant, or obscure part of the world will he betake himself to, and there hide himself, that so he cannot be found?

Will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles?] Or Greeks; and so may design the Jews who were scattered abroad in the times of the Grecian monarchy, under the successors of Alexander, and particularly Antiochus, in distinction from the Babylonish dispersion; or the strangers scattered through Pontus, Galatia, &c. to whom Peter writes, 1. Peter i. 1. The Arabic version renders it, "the

"sect of the Greeks;" by which the Hellenistic Jews seem to be meant: or the Jews in general, wherever and by whomsoever scattered; who might be thought to be more ignorant than the Jews in Judea, and therefore more easily to be imposed upon: hence, in a flouting manner, they inquire whether he will go to those, when he is rejected by them. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, "Will he go into the countries, or country of the 'Gentiles?'" into heathen countries, not to the Jews there, but to the Gentiles themselves,

And teach the Gentiles?] Suggesting, that he was more fit to be a teacher of them than of the Jews, and might meet with more encouragement and success among them, who would not be able to detect him.

36 What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come?

What manner, &c.] It is not easy to be understood; and if that is not meant, which is suggested, what should he mean by saying,

Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me; and where I am, thither ye cannot come?] Repeating the words of Christ just now expressed by him.

37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

In the last day, &c.] That is, of the feast of tabernacles, as appears from *v. 2.* which was usually called, *in the feast*, in distinction from the passover and pentecost (*q*); and the eighth day of it was called, *היום האחרון* "the last day of the 'feast (*n*).'" as here: and it was a great day, being, as is said in *Lev. xxiii. 36.* *A holy convocation, a solemn assembly*, in which no servile work was done, and in which an offering was made by fire unto the Lord. According to the traditions of the Jews, fewer sacrifices were offered on this day than on the rest; for on the first day they offered thirteen bullocks, and lessened one every day, so that on the seventh day there was but seven offered, and on the eighth day but one, when the priests returned to their lots, as at other feasts (*s*): but notwithstanding the Jews make out this to be the greater day for them, since the seventy bullocks offered on the other seven days, were for the seventy nations of the world; but the one bullock, on the eighth day, was peculiarly for the people of Israel (*t*): and besides, they observe, that there were several things peculiar on this day,

(*q*) *Shirhashkita Rabba*, fol. 5. 3. & 7. 3.

Bava Metzia, c. 7. §. 6. & *Maimonides* in *ibid.*

(*s*) *Bartenora* in *Misna Succa*, c. 5. §. 6.

(*t*) *T. Bab. Succa*, fol. 55. 2. *Beamidbar Rabba*, §. 21, fol. 231. 1.

as different from the rest; as the casting of lots, the benediction by itself, a feast by itself, an offering by itself, a song by itself, and a blessing by itself (*u*): and on this day they had also the ceremony of drawing and pouring water, attended with the usual rejoicings as on other days; the account of which is this (*w*): "The pouring out of water" was after this manner; a golden pot, which "held three logs, was filled out of Siloah, and "when they came to the water-gate, they blowed " (their trumpets) and shouted, and blowed; " (then a priest) went up by the ascent of the altar, and turned to the left hand, (where) were "two silver basons—that on the west side was filled with water, and that on the east with wine; "he poured the bason of water into that of wine, "and that of wine into that of water." At which time there were great rejoicing, piping, and dancing, by the most religious and sober people among the Jews; infomuch that it is said (*x*), that "He "that never saw the rejoicing of the place of drawing water, never saw any rejoicing in his life." And this ceremony, they say (*y*), is a tradition of Moses from mount Sinai, and refers to some secret and mysterious things; yea, they plainly say, that it has respect to the pouring forth of the Holy Ghost (*z*). "Says R. Joshua ben Levi, Why is "its name called the place of drawing water? Because, from thence, שואבין מן המקום "they "draw the Holy Ghost," as it is said, *And ye shall "draw water with joy out of the wells of salvation,* "Isaiah xii. 3." Moreover, it was on this day they prayed for the rains for the year ensuing: it is asked (*a*), "From what time do they make mention of the powers of the rains? R. Joshua says, "From the last good day of the feast.—They do "not pray for the rains, but near the rains;" that is, the time of rains: and which, one of their commentators says (*b*), is the eighth day of the feast of tabernacles; for from the feast of tabernacles, thenceforward is the time of rains. The Jews have a notion, that at this feast the rains of the ensuing year were fixed: hence they say (*c*), that "At the "feast of tabernacles judgment is made concerning the waters;" or a decree or determination is "made concerning them by God." Now when all these things are considered, it will easily be seen with what pertinency our Lord expresses himself on this day, with respect to the effusion of the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, as follows:

(*u*) T. Bab. Succa, fol. 43. 1.

(*w*) Misna Succa, c. 4.

§. 9.

(*x*) Ibid. c. 5. §. 1, 4.

(*y*) T. Zeb.

chim, fol. 110. 2. Maimonides in Misna Succa, c. 4. §. 9. & Hilchot Taamid, c. 10. §. 6.

(*z*) T. Hieros. Succa, fol.

55. 1. Bereshith Rabba, §. 70. fol. 62. 3. & Midrash Ruth, fol. 32. 2. Caphtor, fol. 52. 1.

(*a*) Misna Taamid,

c. 1. §. 1, 2.

(*b*) Bartenora in ibid.

(*c*) Misna

Roshhasana, c. 1. §. 2. & T. Bab. Roshhasana, fol. 16. 2.

Jesus stood and cried] He now stood up, whereas at other times he used to sit, and spoke with a loud voice, both to shew his fervour and earnestness, and that all might hear:

Saying, If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink] This is to be understood, not of a natural thirst, though the allusion is to it, which is very painful and distressing; as the instances of the Israelites in the wilderness, Samson after he had slain the Philistines, and our Lord upon the cross, shew; much less a sinful thirst, a thirst after the riches, honours, and pleasures of this life; but a spiritual thirst, or a thirst after spiritual things, after salvation by Christ, and a view of interest in it, free and full pardon of sin through him, justification by his righteousness, a greater degree of knowledge of him, more communion with him, and conformity to him, and after the sincere milk of the word, and the breasts of Gospel-ordinances: and such that thirst after these things, and eagerly desire them, and are in pain and uneasiness without them, as a man is who has a violent thirst upon him, are such as are regenerated and quickened by the Spirit of God, and are made sensible of themselves, and of their state and condition by nature. Now these Christ invites to *come* unto him; not to Moses and his law, moral or ceremonial, and to obedience to them, and works of righteousness done by them, nor to any creature, or creature-acts; for these are cisterns without water, where no true peace, joy, righteousness, and salvation are to be had; but to himself, who is the fountain of gardens, the well of living waters, and who is as rivers of water in a dry land, to thirsty souls: and when come to him, which is by believing in him, they are encouraged to *drink*; that is, to take of the water of life freely, or to take of his grace freely; salvation by him is of free grace, and the pardon of sin is according to the riches of grace, and justification is freely by his grace, and so all other blessings; and of this they may drink abundantly, or they may partake of it largely: there is a fulness of grace in Christ, and there is an abundance of it communicated to his people; it is exceeding abundant; it flows, and overflows, and may be drank of to satisfaction, till their souls are as a watered garden, and they are satisfied with the goodness of the Lord.

38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

He that believeth on me] Which explains what is meant by coming to Christ, and drinking; for these acts are no other than for a man to go out of himself to Christ, and live by faith on him, and

his grace. To which, what follows is a great encouragement;

As the scripture hath said] Some refer these words to the preceding clause concerning believing in Christ, which the writings of the Old Testament speak of, as in *Deut. xviii. 15. Isaiah xlviii. 16. Hab. ii. 4.* and the sense is, that he that believes on Christ, the object of faith the scripture points at, and in him, as that directs and requires; that believes in him as the mighty God, and as the prophet, priest, and king; and as the only foundation of the church, and lives by faith upon him; as just men do, then

Out of his belly shall flow] Though rather they belong to what follows; and do not design any particular place of scripture; for no such one is to be found, where the following passage is expressed in so many words; but all those scriptures which speak of grace, under the metaphors of water, and abundance of water, as rivers and floods of water, and of the effusion of the holy Spirit, under such figurative expressions, such as *Isaiah xli. 17, 18.* and chapter *xliii. 20.* and *xliv. 3.* and *lviii. 11. Joel ii. 28.* Hence the Syriac version reads in the plural number, "as the scriptures hath said;" referring to more than one: *Out of his belly shall flow*

Rivers of living water] The grace of the Spirit of God is signified by *water*, because it is of a cleansing and purifying nature, as faith and hope are, having to do with the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin; and because it fructifies and causes the saints, as trees of righteousness, to grow, and bring forth fruit; and especially because it is cooling to those who are scorched with the heat of a fiery law, and very refreshing to thirsty souls: and it is called *living water*, because by it dead sinners are quickened, drooping faints are revived and comforted; spiritual life in them is maintained and supported, and it springs up to, and issues in eternal life: and it is expressed by *rivers of living water*, because of the abundance of it in regeneration, justification, and pardon; it is grace for grace, abundance of grace believers receive from Christ; and from him, in whom those large measures of grace are, they *flow out* again, even *out of his belly*: from within him, out of his heart, the seat of it, by his lips, both in prayer to God, and in conversation with the saints, to whom he communicates his rich experiences of grace, to their comfort, and the glory of God: for grace is of a diffusive and communicative nature; out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh: and also it flows out by his life and conversation, which is sober, righteous, and godly; and this the grace of God teaches and influences: and this grace, as it is permanent and lasting itself, even

perpetual, and always abiding; so it continues to flow, and to shew itself in its acts and effects, in one way or another. The Jews ought not to find fault with Christ's using such expressions, mystically understood, since they, comparing Moses and the Messiah together, say, "As the first redeemer caused a well to spring up, in the last Redeemer shall cause waters to spring up, according to *Joel iii. 18 (4).*"

39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

But this spake he of the Spirit] These are the words of the Evangelist, explaining the figurative expressions of Christ; shewing, that by rivers of living water, he meant the Spirit in his gifts and graces; and which is the plain sense of the passages referred to by him, particularly *Isaiah xlv. 3. Joel ii. 28.* and which, as before observed, the Jews supposed were intimated by their drawing and pouring water at the feast of tabernacles.

Which they that believe on him should receive] The apostles, and others, that had believed on Christ, and had received the Spirit, as a Spirit of regeneration and sanctification; as a Spirit of illumination and conversion; as a Spirit of faith and adoption; but on the day of Pentecost they were to receive a larger, even an extraordinary measure of his gifts and grace, to qualify them for greater work and service:

For the Holy Ghost was not yet given] The word *given* is not in the original text, but is very properly supplied, as it is in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persian versions. The Arabic version renders it, "for the Holy Ghost was not yet come;" he was; he was in being as a divine person, equal with the Father and Son, so he was from everlasting; and he had been bestowed in his grace upon the Old Testament saints, and rested in his gifts upon the prophets of that dispensation; but, as the Jews themselves confess (a); "After the death of the latter prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, the Holy Ghost removed from Israel." And they expressly say, he was not there in the time of the second temple. Mai-monides says (f), "They made the Urim and Thummim in the second temple, to complete the eight garments (of the priests,) though they did not inquire by them. And why did they not inquire by them? Because the Holy Ghost was not there;

(d) Midrash Kohler, fol. 63. 2.

(e) T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 9. 2. Sota, fol. 43. 2. & Sanhedrim, fol. 11. 2. fol. 101.

(f) Hilchot Cole Hamikdash, c. 10. §. 10. Vid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 73. 2. Midrash Kohler, fol. 63. 2. & T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 73. 2.

"there; and every priest that does not speak by the Holy Ghost, and the Shekinah does not dwell upon him; they do not inquire by him." They observe (g) there were five things in the first temple which were not in the second, and they are these, "The ark with the mercy-seat, and cherubim; the fire (from heaven); and the Shekinah *וְשֵׁכִינָה* and the Holy Ghost," and "the Urim and Thummim." Now, though he had removed, he was to return again; but as yet the time was not come, at least for the more plentiful donation of him: the reason of which was,

Because that Jesus was not yet glorified] He had not as yet gone through his state of humiliation; he had not yet suffered, and died, and rose again, and ascended, and sat down at the right hand of God; for the holy Spirit was to come upon his departure, and in consequence of his sufferings and death, and being made sin, and a curse for his people; and through his mediation and intercession, and upon his exaltation at the Father's right hand; when being made, and declared Lord and Christ, this should be notified by the effusion of his Spirit; see *Acts* ii. 33, 36.

40 ¶ Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.

Many of the people therefore] Of the common people, and it may be chiefly those that came out of the country,

When they heard this saying] Or discourse of Christ, on the last and great day of the feast, relating to the large measure of grace, and the effusion of the Spirit on him, that believed,

Said, Of a truth this is the Prophet] Spoken of in *Deut.* xviii. 15. which some understood not of the Messiah, but of some extraordinary prophet distinct from him, who should come before him, or about the same time; or they imagined he was one of the old prophets raised from the dead, whom they also expected about the times of the Messiah: or their sense might only be, that he was a prophet, which was true, though not all the truth; they had some knowledge, though but small; and they spake of him, though but as children in understanding.

41 Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?

Others said, This is the Christ] The true Messiah, which they concluded, not only from the miracles, *7. 31.* but from his speaking of rivers of living water flowing from him that believes in him; for the same prophecy that speaks of miracles

to be performed in the times of the Messiah, speaks also of waters breaking out in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; of the parched ground becoming a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water, *Isa.* xxxv. 5-7.

But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?] As they supposed Jesus did; and because he was educated at Nazareth, and Capernaum was his city, and he chiefly conversed, preached, and wrought his miracles in these parts, they concluded that he was born there; and therefore object this to his being the true Messiah. For if they did not mean this, according to their own accounts, the Messiah was to be in Galilee, and to be first revealed there; for they affirm (h) this in so many words, that *הַמָּלֵךְ מְשִׁיחַ בְּאֶרֶץ גַּלִּיל* "the king Messiah shall be revealed in the land of Galilee;" accordingly Jesus, the true Messiah, as he was brought up in Galilee, though not born there, so he first preached there, and there wrought his first miracle; here he chiefly was, unless at the public feasts; and here he manifested himself to his disciples after his resurrection.

42 Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

Hath not the scripture said] These objectors were those who were accounted the more wise and knowing; who were conversant with the scriptures, and pretended at least to a large knowledge of them:

That Christ cometh out of the seed of David] That he should be a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots; that he should be one out of David's loins, and of the fruit of his body, referring to *Isaiah* xi. 1. *Psalms* cxxxii. 11, 17. which was very true, and what was commonly known, and expected among the Jews, that the Messiah should be David's son, as Jesus of Nazareth was, *Acts* xiii. 23.

And out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?] Where his parents lived, and he was born; and, according to Jerom (i), he was buried here. The account he gives of this city, where he himself for some time lived, is; "Bethlehem, the city of David, in the lot of the tribe of Judah, in which our Lord and Saviour was born, is six miles from *Ælia*, (that is, Jerusalem) to the south, by the way which leads to Hebron, where also is shewed the sepulchre of Jesse and David." In which may be observed likewise the exact distance of this place from Jerusalem; which, according to Josephus (k), at least as he is generally understood, was but twenty furlongs; and, according

(g) T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 21. 2. Vid. Jarchi & Kimchi in Hagg. i. 8.

(h) Zohar in Gen. fol. 74. 3. & in Exod. fol. 3. 3. & 4. 1.

(i) De locis Hebraicis, fol. 89. E.

(k) Antig. l. 7. c. 12. §. 4.

ing to Justin (1), thirty-five: but that this is the true distance, is clear from the old Jerusalem itinerary (m), and which agrees with Jerom about the sepulchre of David; for not far from it is the monuments of Ezekiel, Asaph, Job, Jesse, David, and Solomon. However, it is certain that David was born here, and therefore it is called *his* city; and from hence the Messiah was to come; and here Jesus, the true Messiah, was born; and which the Jews themselves own; see the notes on *Matt. ii. 1.* and *Luke ii. 4.* And in vain it is for them to expect the Messiah from thence, where none of their nation live, nor have lived, for many hundreds of years; being particularly forbid by Adrian, after he had subdued them, living in or near Jerusalem and also Bethlehem. Tertullian (n) refers to this when he thus argues with them, and very justly and strongly; "If he is not yet born, who, it is said, shall come forth a Ruler out of Bethlehem, of the tribe of Judah; he must come, says he, out of the tribe of Judah, and from Bethlehem; but we now observe, that no one of the stock of Israel remains in Bethlehem, because it is forbidden that any one of the Jews should continue on the border of that country—how shall the Governor be born in Judea, come forth from Bethlehem, as the divine books of the prophets declare; when there is none of Israel left there at this day, of whose lineage Christ can be born? How shall he come out of Bethlehem, when there is none in Bethlehem of the stock of Israel?" And the passage they had in view, is *Micah v. 2.* Now those very things they object to Jesus's being the Messiah, were what were fulfilled in him, and proved him to be the person; for his supposed father, and real mother Mary, were of the house and lineage of David; and though he was conceived at Nazareth, and brought up there, yet, by a remarkable providence, which brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem, he was born there, *Luke ii. 4—7.*

43 So there was a division among the people because of him.

Some, though they did not go so far as to believe him to be the Messiah, yet took him to be a prophet, and a very extraordinary one: others made no difficulty to assert him to be the Christ; and others objected to it on account of the country from whence he came, and so fulfilled the words of Christ, *Luke xii. 51.*

44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

Some of the latter sort, who did not believe he was the Messiah; who were the most averse to him, and hot and furious against him; these were for seizing him at once in a violent manner, and for carrying him before the sanhedrim, as an impostor and blasphemer, to be examined, and tried, and judged by them, to whom it belonged to judge and determine concerning such persons:

But no man laid hands on him.] Though they had a good will to do it; they were held back and restrained by the providence of God; and were diverted from it upon one consideration or another; either fearing the people, or being awed by the majesty of Christ's countenance, or words; the true reason of which was, that which is before given, that his hour was not yet come.

45 ¶ Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

Then came the officers, &c.] Who were assembled together in council, as the great sanhedrim of the nation; who were sitting and expecting Jesus to be brought before them. The same officers they sent to take him, *2: 32.* returned to them without him; for though they were sent on that errand, which they intended to have performed, yet they were not on the side of those who were for seizing him by force, nor of those who objected to his being the Messiah; but rather took part with those who affirmed he was the Messiah; or at least looked upon him to be some extraordinary prophet.

And they said unto them.] That is, the chief priests and Pharisees said to the officers; the Syriac version reads, "the priests said unto them."

Why have ye not brought him?] They mention not the name of Jesus, by way of contempt, and knowing that the officers would easily understand them; though the Perfic version expresses it, reading the words thus, "Why have ye not brought Jesus?" Seeing them returned without him, they were transported with rage and fury, and fell upon them in a fierce and furious manner, for disobeying their orders, who had sat there waiting some time; and hoping, and not doubting, but they should have him in their hands; whose blood they were thirsting after: wherefore it was a great disappointment to them, and much enraged them to see the officers come without him.

46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

The officers answered.] Very honestly and uprightly, making use of no shifts and excuses; as that they could not find him, or could not come at him, because of the multitude about him, or that they were afraid of the people, lest they should

(1) Apolog. 2. p. 75.

(m) In Reland, *Palestina illustrata*, l. 2. c. 4. p. 416. Vid. c. 9. p. 443. & l. 3. p. 643.

(n) Adv. Judæos, c. 13. p. 224, 225.

rife upon them, and stone them, and rescue Jesus; which would have carried a shew of probability, and have brought them off; but they tell the naked truth, saying,

Never man spake like this man] Not Moses, the spokesman of the people of Israel; nor David, the anointed of the God of Jacob, the sweet Psalmist of Israel; nor Solomon, the wisest of men; nor that sublime and evangelical prophet Isaiah; nor any of the other prophets; nor John Baptist his forerunner, *the voice of one crying in the wilderness*; never man spoke words for matter like him; such gracious words, or words and doctrines of grace; which so fully express the grace of God, and are so grateful to men; such as free justification by his righteousness, full pardon by his blood, peace and reconciliation by his sacrifice; the liberty of captives from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law, and spiritual and eternal salvation by him: never man spoke such words of truth, as he who is full of truth, and truth itself did: or such words of wisdom, who is the wisdom of God, on whom the spirit of wisdom rested, and in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; nor such wholesome and salutary words, which nourish up unto eternal life. Nor did ever any speak words for form and manner, as he did; words so apt and pertinent, with such propriety, beauty, and gracefulness, with such majesty and authority, and with such power and efficacy; which at once charmed the ear, affected the heart, carried evidence and conviction with them, enlightened the understanding, and fastened attention to them; which was the case with these men, so that they had not power to execute their commission. He delivered such excellent things, and in such a charming manner, they could not find in their hearts to use any violence towards him; or be the means of bringing him into any trouble or danger. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persian versions read, "never man spake as this man speaks."

47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?

As well as the common people; you that have been so long in our service, and should know better; or who, at least, should have taken the sense of your superiors, and should have waited to have had their opinion and judgment of him, and been determined by that, and not so hastily have joined with a deluded set of people. It was the common character of Christ, and his apostles, and so of all his faithful ministers in all succeeding ages, that they were deceivers, and the people that followed them deceived, a parcel of poor deluded creatures, carried aside by their teachers; when,

on the other hand, they are the deceived ones, who live in sin, and indulge themselves in it; or who trust in themselves that they are righteous; who think they are something, when they are nothing; who imagine, that touching the righteousness of the law, they are blameless, are free from sin, and need no repentance; who follow the traditions and commandments of men: whereas those cannot be deceived, who follow Christ, the way, the truth, and the life, and his faithful ministers, who shew unto men the way of salvation.

48 Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?

Have any of the rulers] In the sanhedrim, or of the synagogues, or the civil magistrates, the noble, rich, and wealthy:

Or of the Pharisees, believed on him?] Men famous for wisdom, learning, and holiness. It must be owned, there were but very few of this sort, and perhaps not an instance of this kind had as yet occurred to them; there was Nicodemus, who is mentioned in the context, who was both a ruler and a Pharisee; and Joseph of Arimathea, a rich counsellor; but they neither of them openly shewed themselves to be the disciples of Christ, till his death: and besides these, there were some women, as Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, Susanna, and some other women, who ministered to him of their substance; but the far greater part of his followers were poor and illiterate: and this has been the common case of those that have believed in Jesus, for the most part, ever since, and therefore should not be a stumbling to any. God is pleased to hide the great things of the Gospel from the wise and prudent, the rich and noble, and preach and reveal them to the poor and foolish; nor is a doctrine a whit the truer for being espoused by the rich, and wise men of this world, but rather to be suspected on that account.

49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

With great contempt they stile the followers of Jesus *this people*; the common people, the dregs of them, the refuse of the earth; and whom they call, *the people of the earth*, in distinction from the wise men, and their disciples: and when they speak the best of them, their account is this (p); "One of the people of the earth, is one that has moral excellencies, but not intellectual ones; that is, there is in him common civility, but the law is not in him;" as here,

Who

(p) Maimon, in Pirke Ahot, c. 2. §. 5. & 1. §. 5. & 7.

Who knoweth not the law are cursed] They always reckon them very ignorant. Says one (q) of their writers, "They that are without knowledge are the multitude." And elsewhere it is said (r), "*with the ancient is wisdom*." Upon which one of the commentators (s) has this gloss; "These are the disciples of the wise men; for the people of the earth, what wisdom is there in them?" By the law here, is meant either the written law of Moses, which the Pharisees boasted of, and of their knowledge of it, as having the key of knowledge to open it; as understanding the true sense, and capable of giving a right interpretation of it to the people; though they themselves were wretchedly ignorant of it, as appears by their false glosses on it, refuted by our Lord in *Matthew v.* Or else the oral law is here intended, which they pretended was given by word of mouth to Moses, and handed down to posterity from one to another; and this lay among the doctors, until the times of R. Judah, who collected the whole of the traditions of the elders together, and published it under the title of the *Misna*; and then, as Maimonides says (t), it was revealed to all Israel; whereas before it was but in a few hands, who instructed others in it: but as for the common people, they knew little of it, especially of the nice distinctions and decisions of it; and these people were always had in great contempt by the wise men: they would not receive a testimony from them, nor give one for them, nor deliver a secret to them, nor proclaim any thing of theirs that was lost, nor walk with them in the way, nor make a guardian of any of them (u). The people of the earth were not reckoned holy or religious (w), but generally profane and wicked; that they were abandoned to sin, rejected of God, and to be cast off by men; yea, they will not allow that they shall rise again at the last day, unless it be for the sake of some wise men they are allied unto (y), or have done some service for. Thus we see in what contempt the common people were with the learned doctors, and what an opinion these men had of the followers of Christ; though, in truth, they were not so ignorant of the law as themselves: they knew the spirituality of it: that it reached to the thoughts of the heart, as well as to external actions; they knew what it required, and their own impotence to answer its demands; they knew the wrath, terror, and curses of it, and that Christ only was the fulfilling end of it, for righteousness to those that believed in him: and they were far from being cursed persons; they were blessed with all spiritual

blessings; with the pardon of their sins, and the justification of their persons; with grace and peace in their souls, and would be introduced as the blessed of the Father into his kingdom and glory.

50 Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them.)

Nicodemus saith, &c.] To the Jewish sanhedrim, who were running down Christ, and his followers, in great wrath and fury.

He that came to Jesus by night] See *John iii. 1, 2.*

Bring one of them] A member of the sanhedrim.

51 Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?

Doth our law, &c.] Or condemn any man; or can any man be lawfully condemned.

Before it hear him] What he has to say for himself? Is this the usual process in our courts? or is this a legal one to condemn a man unheard?

And know what he doeth?] What his crimes are? This he said, having a secret respect for Christ, though he had not courage enough openly to appear for him.

52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

They answered, &c.] Being displeased with him, and as reproaching him, though they could not deny, or refute what he said.

Art thou also of Galilee?] A follower of Jesus of Galilee, whom, by way of contempt, they called the Galilean, and his followers Galileans, as Judah the apostate after them did; for otherwise they knew that Nicodemus was not of the country of Galilee.

Search and look] Into the histories of former times, and especially the scriptures:

For out of Galilee ariseth no prophet] But this is false, for Jonah the prophet was of Gath Hepher, which was in the tribe of Zebulun; which tribe was in Galilee; see *2 Kings xiv. 25. Joshua xix. 10, 13, 16.* And the Jews (x) themselves say, that Jonah, the son of Amittai, was, *יהונתן* "of Zebulun;" and that his father was of Zebulun; and his mother was of Asher (y); both which tribes were in Galilee: and if no prophet had, as yet, arose from thence, it did not follow that no one ever should arise: besides, there is a prophecy in which it was foretold, that a prophet, and even the Messiah, the great Light, should arise in Galilee; see *Isaiah ix. 1, 2.* and they themselves say,

that

(q) Abaskinel in proph. post. fol. 473. (r) *Misn. Kerith*, c. 7. §. 6. *Vil. T. Bab. Sabbath*, fol. 152. 1.

(s) Bartenora in *Misn. ib. d.* (t) *Praefat. ad Yad. Horaka*.

(u) Buxtorf. *Lex. Talmud.* col. 1626. (x) *Ibid. Florileg.*

Heb. p. 276. (y) *T. Bab. Cethubot*, fol. 121. 2.

(x) *T. Hieros. Succa*, fol. 55. 2.

(y) *Berachit, Raba*, §. 98, fol. 85. 4.

that the Messiah should be revealed in Galilee; see the note on *ŷ. 41.*

53 And every man went unto his own house.

The officers not bringing Jesus with them, and the sanhedrim being posed by Nicodemus, broke up without doing any business, and every member of it went home. This we may suppose was about the time of the evening sacrifice; for "The great sanhedrim sat from the time of the morning daily sacrifice, to the time of the evening daily sacrifice (*b*).^(b)" And it is said (*c*), that "After the evening daily sacrifice, the sanhedrim went, *לבתיהם* 'to their own houses';" as they now did, and not to their booths, the feast of tabernacles being now over.

CHAP. VIII.

In this chapter we have Christ teaching in the temple, where the scribes bring to him a woman taken in adultery, *ŷ. 1—6.* but he disappoints their intention, and lets the woman go, *ŷ. 7—11.* he telleth them, that he is the light of the world, *ŷ. 12.* and justifies himself by his own and his Father's testimony, *ŷ. 13—20.* he tells them that unbelievers shall die in their sins, *ŷ. 21—25.* shewing them who he is, and by whom he is sent, *ŷ. 26—30.* his promises to believers, *ŷ. 31—36.* and telleth them who is their father, *ŷ. 37—45.* he reproves their unbelief, *ŷ. 46, 47.* testifying that Abraham saw his day, and was glad, *ŷ. 48—58.* and asks wherefore they would stone him, *ŷ. 59.*

1 JESUS went into the mount of Olives.

This mount lay eastward of Jerusalem, about a mile from it; hither Christ went on the evening of the last day of the feast of tabernacles; partly to decline the danger, and avoid the snares the Jews might lay for him in the night-season, having been disappointed and confounded in the day-time; and it may be for the sake of recreation and diversion, to sup with his dear friends Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, who lived at Bethany, not far from this mount; and chiefly for private prayer to God, on account of himself as man, and for his disciples and for the spread of his Gospel, and for the enlargement of his interest; this being his common and usual method, *Luke xxi. 37.*

2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.

And early in the morning, &c.] Early, which shews his diligence, constancy, and assiduity in his ministerial work, as well as his courage and intrepidity; being fearless of his enemies, though careful to give them no advantage against him, before his time:

And all the people came unto him] Which also commends the industry and diligence of his hearers, who were forward to hear him, and were early at the temple for that purpose, and that in great numbers:

And he sat down and taught them] He sat, as his manner was; see the note on *Matthew v. 1.* and taught them, as one having authority, and such doctrine, and in such a manner, as never man did; with all plainness, boldness, and freedom.

3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery: and when they had set her in the midst,

The members of the sanhedrim, who had been so miserably disappointed the day before, were no less diligent and industrious in their wicked way, seeking all opportunities, and taking all advantages against Christ; and fancying they had got something whereby to ensnare him, and bring him into disgrace or danger, they pursue it; and

Brought unto him a woman taken in adultery] Who, as some conjecture, might have been taken in it the day before, in one of their booths; being drawn into it through intemperance and carnal mirth, which at this feast they greatly indulged themselves in; which shews, that they were so far from drawing the Holy Ghost at this time upon them, that, on the contrary, they fell into the hands, and under the power of the unclean spirit. Who this woman was, is not material to know; what is pretended to be taken out of the annals of the Spanish Jews, is no doubt a fable; that she was the wife of one Manasseh of Jerusalem, an old man, and that her name was Susanna (*a*):

And when they had set her in the midst] Of the company, as the Peric version reads, to be seen by all the people. This history of the woman taken in adultery, is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and in other ancient copies; nor is it in Nonnus, Chrysostom, and Theophylact; nor in any of the editions of the Syriac version, until it was restored by De Dieu, from a copy of Archbishop Usher's; but was in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, and in the Harmonies of Tatian and Ammonius; the former of which lived about the year 160, and so within 60 years, or thereabouts, of the death of the Evangelist John, and the other about

(b) Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrim, c. 3. *ŷ. 1.*

(c) P. See Tosephot Sanhedrim, *ut. 35.*

(a) Vid. Selden, Uxor. Hebr. l. 3. c. 11. p. 377.

about the year 130; it was also in Stephens's sixteen ancient Greek copies, and in all Beza's seventeen, excepting one; nor need the authenticity of it be doubted of; Eusebius (*b*) says, it is in the Gospel according to the Hebrews; nor should its authority be called in question.

4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

They applied to him in a handsome and respectful manner, the better to cover their ill design:

This woman was taken in adultery] By two persons at least, who could be witnesses of it; otherwise the accusation was not legal; see *Deut.* xix. 15. though in the case of a wife suspected of adultery, they admitted a single witness as valid (*c*):

In the very act] Or "in the theft itself;" for adultery is a theft; it is an unlawful use of another's property. See this word used in the same sense, in *Heliodor.* l. i. §. 11.

5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

Not in *Lev.* xx. 10. for though according to the law there, an adulteress, one that was a married woman, and so an adulterer, that was a married man, were to be put to death; yet the death was not stoning, but strangling; for it is a rule with the Jews (*d*), that where death is simply mentioned (without restraining it to any particular kind) strangling is intended, and which rule they apply to this law: and accordingly in their *Misna*, or oral law, one that lies with another man's wife, is reckoned among those that are to be strangled (*e*). *Kimchi* indeed says (*f*), that adulteresses, according to the law, are to be stoned with stones; but then this must be understood of such as are betrothed, but not married; and such a person, Moses has commanded in the law to be stoned, *Deut.* xxii. 23, 24. And with this agree the traditions of the Jews (*g*); "A daughter of Israel must be stoned, who is, ארוסה ולא נשואה, betrothed, but not married." And such an one we must believe this woman was; she was betrothed to a man, but not married to him, and therefore to be stoned: the Jews (*h*) have also a saying, that "If all adulterers were punished with stoning, according to the law, the stones would be consumed, but they would not be consumed;" adultery was so common with that people: but

What sayest thou?] Dost thou agree with Moses, or not?

6 This they said tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground as though he heard them not.

For they brought this woman, and exposed her in this manner, not because of their abhorrence and detestation of the sin; nor did they put the above question to Christ, out of their great respect to the law of Moses; which in many instances, and so in this, they in a great measure made void, by their traditions; for they say, that for such an offence as adultery, they did not put to death, nor beat, unless there was a previous admonition; the use of which was, to distinguish between presumptuous sins, and wilful ones (*i*); but if there was no admonition, and the woman, even a married woman, if she confessed the crime, all her punishment was to have her dowry taken from her, or to go away without it (*k*). Now these masters say nothing about the admonition, nor do they put the question, whether this woman was to be dealt with according to their traditions, or according to the law of Moses? But what was the sense of Christ, whether Moses's law was to be attended to, or whether he would propose another rule to go by? And their view in this was,

That they might have to accuse him] That should he agree with Moses, then they would accuse him to the Roman governor, for taking upon him to condemn a person to death, which belonged to him to do; or they would charge him with severity, and acting inconsistently with himself, who received such sort of sinners, and eat with them; and had declared, that publicans and harlots would enter into the kingdom of heaven, when the scribes and Pharisees would not; and if he should disagree with Moses, then they would traduce him among the people, as an enemy to Moses and his law, and as a patron of the most scandalous enormities:

But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground] Some think (*l*), he wrote in legible characters the sins of the woman's accusers; and the learned *Wagenfeil* (*m*) makes mention of an ancient Greek manuscript he had seen, in which were the following words; "the sins of every one of them." Dr *Lightfoot* is of opinion, that this action of Christ tallies with, and has some reference to, the action of the priest at the trial of the suspected wife; who took of the dust of the floor

(b) Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 39. (c) Maimon. Hilchot Eduth, c. 5. §. 2.

(d) Maimon. Hilchot Issure B'a, c. 1. §. 6.

(e) Misn. Sanhedrim, c. 10. §. 1. (f) In Esch. xvi. 40.

(g) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 51. 2.

(h) Apud Castell. Lex. Polyglott., col. 2180.

(i) Maimon. ibid. §. 3.

(k) Misn. Sota, c. 1. §. 5.

(l) Hieron. adv. Pelagianos, l. 2. fol. 96. H. tom. II.

(m) In Misn. Sota, c. 1. §. 5.

floor of the tabernacle, and infused it in the bitter waters for her to drink; but it is most likely, that Christ on purpose put himself into this posture, as if he was busy about something else, and did not attend to what they said; and hereby cast some contempt upon them, as if they and their question were unworthy of his notice: and this sense is confirmed by what follows,

As though he heard them not] Though this clause is not in many copies, nor in the Vulgate Latin, nor in any of the Oriental versions, but is in five of Beza's copies, and in the Complutensian edition.

7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

For observing that he put himself in such a posture, they concluded that they had puzzled and perplexed him, and that he knew not what to say; and therefore they were more urgent for a speedy answer, hoping they should get an advantage of him; and that they should be able to expose him, and that his confusion would appear to all the people:

He lift up himself, and said unto them] Having raised up himself, he looked wistfully at them, and returned them this wise answer, to their confusion,

He that is without sin among you] Meaning, not that was entirely free from sin, in heart, in lip, and life; for there is no such person; the most holy man in life, is not in such sense free from sin; but that was without any notorious sin, or was not guilty of some scandalous sin, and particularly this of adultery; which was in this age a prevailing sin, and even among their doctors; hence our Lord calls that generation, an *adulterous* one, *Matth. xii. 39.* and which was literally true of them; with this compare *Romans ii. 22.* Adultery increased to such a degree in this age, that they were obliged to leave off the trial of suspected wives, because their husbands were generally guilty this way; and the waters would have no effect if the husband was criminal also: so the Jews say (n), "When adulterers increased, the bitter waters ceased; and" Rabban Jochanan ben Zaccai (who was now living) caused them to cease." In vindication of which, he cited the passage in *Hosea iv. 14.* and this agrees with their own account of the times of the Messiah, and the signs thereof, among which stands this (o); "In the age in which the Son of David comes, the house of assembly (the gloss interprets it the place where the disciples of the wise men meet to learn the law) shall become,

"a brothel house." And that this sin so greatly prevailed, our Lord well knew; and perhaps none of those scribes and Pharisees were free from it, in one shape or another; and therefore bids him that was,

First cast a stone at her] Alluding to the law in *Deut. xvii. 7.* which required the hands of the witnesses to be upon a person first, to put him to death; and as Dr Lightfoot thinks, referring to their own sense and opinion, in trying a wife suspected of adultery; that if the husband was guilty the same way, the waters would have no effect. By this answer of our Lord, he at once wrought himself out of the dilemma they thought to distress him with; for though he passed no sentence upon the woman, and so took not upon him the judiciary power, with which they could accuse him to the Roman governor, yet he manifestly appeared to agree with Moses, that such an one deserved to be stoned; wherefore they could not charge him with being contrary to Moses; and by putting him that was *without sin*, to cast the first stone at her, he shewed himself merciful to the woman, and proved himself to them to be the searcher of hearts.

8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

As before, having said enough to confound them, and yet unwilling to pursue the matter any further, or publicly expose them in any other way; and that they might have an opportunity of withdrawing themselves without any further notice of his, he took this method.

9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

Not all, not the disciples of Christ, nor the multitude, but they of the scribes and Pharisees:

Being convicted by their own conscience] That they were not *without sin*, nor free from this; they had a beam in their own eye, who were so forward to observe the mote in another's; and oftentimes so it is, that those who are most forward to reprove, and bear hardest on others for their sins, are as culpable in another way, if not in the same; when sin lies at the door, and conscience is awakened and open, it is as good as a thousand witnesses; and lets in, and owns the sin which lies heavy, and makes sad work; and fills with anguish, confusion, and shame, as it did these men: who

Went out one by one] From the temple, in as private a manner, and as unobserved as they could:

Beginning

(n) Mishn. Sota, c. 9. §. 9.

(o) Mishn. Ibid. c. 9. §. 15. T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 97. 2.

Beginning at the eldest] Who might have been most culpable, or however soonest took the hint, being more wise and sagacious:

Even unto the last] This is wanting in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions, and in two of Beza's copies, and the Basil edition:

And Jesus was left alone] Not by his disciples, nor the multitude, but by his antagonists, who came to tempt and ensnare him: for it follows,

And the woman standing in the midst] That is, of the company, as before.

10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

Lifted up himself from the earth, towards which he stooped, and on which he had been writing:

And saw none but the woman] That is, none of those that had brought her there, and had accused her to him:

He said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers?] The Syriac and Arabic versions read only, "Where are these?" these men, that brought thee here, and charged thee with this crime:

Hath no man condemned thee?] Has no one offered to do unto thee what I proposed? What, not one that could take up a stone, and cast at thee? Was there not one of them free from this sin? Could no man take upon him to execute this sentence?

11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

She said, &c.] No man said a word to me, or lift up his hand against me, or moved a stone at me:

And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee] Christ came not into the world to act the part of a civil magistrate, and therefore refused to arbitrate a case, or be concerned in dividing an inheritance between two brethren, *Luke xii. 13, 14.* Nor did he come into the world to condemn it, *but that the world through him might be saved, John iii. 17.* nor would he pass any other sentence on this woman than what he had done; nor would he inflict any punishment on her himself; but suitable and agreeable to his office, as a prophet, he declares against her sin, calls her to repentance, and bids her

Go, and sin no more] Left, as he said to the man he cured at Bethesda's pool, *a worse thing should come unto her.* Wherefore the Jew (p) has no reason to object to this conduct of Christ, as if he

acted contrary to the law in *Deut. xiii. 5.* *Thou shalt put the evil away from the midst of thee;* and also to the sanctions of all civil laws among men, which order the removal of evil, by putting delinquents to death; and he observes, that those that believe in him, do not follow him in this, but put adulterers and adulteresses to death; and that indeed, should his example and instructions take place, all courts of judicature must cease, and order be subverted among men: but it should be observed, that our Lord manifested a regard, even to the law of Moses, when he bid this woman's accusers, that were without sin, to cast the first stone at her; though as for the law in *Deut. xiii. 5.* that respects a false prophet, and not an adulterer or an adulteress; nor do the civil laws of all nations require death in the case of adultery; and did they, Christ here neither by his words or actions contradicts or sets aside any such laws of God or man; he left this fact to be inquired into, examined, and judged, and sentence passed by proper persons, whose business it was: as for himself, his office was not that of a civil magistrate, but of a Saviour and Redeemer; and suitable to that he acted in this case; he did not connive at the sin, he reprobated for it; nor did he deny that she ought to suffer according to the law of Moses, but rather suggests she ought; but as this was not his province, he did not take upon him to pronounce any sentence of condemnation on her; but called her to repentance, and as the merciful and compassionate Saviour, gave her reason to hope for pardon and eternal life.

12 ¶ Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

The Syriac fragment of Bishop Usher's, published by De Dieu, prefaces this verse thus, "When they were gathered together, Jesus said," &c. that is, the scribes and Pharisees, who went out and returned again; or some others of them, who came after this, to whom Christ addressed himself thus:

I am the light of the world] Which he might say, on occasion of the rising sun, which was now up, and might shine brightly in their faces, see *ψ. 2.* which is, *אור היום* "the light of the world," as Aben Ezra in *Psalms xix. 8.* rightly calls it: thus on occasion of the water in Jacob's well, he discoursed of living water; and upon the Jews at Capernaum mentioning the manna, he treated at large concerning himself as the bread of life: and he might also make use of this character, and apply it to himself, with a view to some passages in the Old Testament, which speak of him

(p) R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 47. p. 435, 436.

under the metaphor of *the sun*, as *Psal. lxxiv. 11. Mal. iv. 2.* and represent him as *the light*; and the Jews (*q*) themselves say, that *light* is one of the names of the Messiah; and God himself is called by them, *the light of the world* (*r*): and likewise he may have regard to those pompous titles and characters, which the Jewish doctors assumed arrogantly to themselves, and oppose himself to them; for they not only called Moses their master, מוֹשֶׁה אֲדוֹנֵינוּ "the light of the world" (*s*), and also the law of Moses (*t*), but their Rabbins and doctors; see the note on *Matt. v. 14.* By *the world* here is meant, not the whole world, and all the individuals of it; for though Christ, as the creator of all things, is the light of men, and does lighten every individual man, with the light of nature and reason, yet not in a spiritual and saving manner, as is here intended; nor the whole body of the elect of God, though they are sometimes called *the world*, being the better part of it, and are made light in the Lord, in a special sense; nor the Jews only, and the chosen of God among them, though Christ was a great light to many of them, *that sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death*; but the Gentiles are here designed, who were usually called by the Jews, *the world*; see the note on *John iii. 16.* And these were in gross darkness before the coming of Christ, about the divine being; concerning the object, nature, and manner of worship; the scriptures, the Law, and Gospel; the Messiah, and his office and work; the Spirit of God, and his operations of grace; the resurrection of the dead, and a future state. Now Christ came to be a *light of the Gentiles*, as well as *the glory of his people Israel*: our Lord seems to have respect to the prophecy of him, in *Isa. xlii. 6.* as well as alludes to the sun in the firmament; whose light is diffused to all the nations of the earth, and not confined to one spot of land only. But since Christ was the minister of the circumcision, and was sent only to *the lost sheep of the house of Israel*, it may be asked, How could he be *the light of the Gentiles*? To which it may be replied, That he was so by his apostles, who were sent by him with the light of the Gospel into all the world; and by his Spirit, who enlightens the minds of men, who were darkness itself, with the light of Christ: for he is not only the author and giver of the light of nature to all men, but also of the light of grace to all his chosen ones, Gentiles as well as Jews; who in his light see light; see themselves lost and undone, and him to be the only willing, able, suitable, and compleat Saviour; and behold wondrous things in the

doctrines of the Gospel, and have some glimpse of glory: and he is likewise the author of all the light of glory the saints enjoy in the other world; *the Lamb is the light* of that state; he is their everlasting light, and their glory; and happy are they who are his followers now:

He that followeth me] Not corporally, but spiritually, by faith; for as believing is expressed by coming to Christ, so by following after him; compare with this *John xii. 46.* and with love and affection to him, the desires of the soul being unto him, and to the remembrance of him; and in the exercise of every grace, and discharge of every duty in imitation of him; and through a variety of sufferings and tribulations, pressing after him as the guide, captain, and forerunner: and such

Shall not walk in darkness] In the darkness of unregeneracy, not knowing what they are, and where they are, and whither they are going; for such know they are in the light; and though they were blind, that now they see; they know in whom they have believed, and that they are in Christ, in the covenant of grace, and in the love of God, and are going to heaven and eternal happiness; *such shall not walk in the darkness* of unbelief, but walk by faith on Christ; nor in the darkness of error, but in the truth of the Gospel, and as becomes it; and tho' they may sometimes walk without the light of God's countenance, yet light shall arise to them; and such "shall not go into darkness," as the Ethiopic version renders the words, into outer darkness, or the darkness of eternal death:

But shall have the light of life] The grace of God abiding in them now; which as it is a well of living water, springing up to eternal life, so it is a shining light, which increases to the perfect day: as darkness and death, so light and life go together; grace, which is enlightening, is also quickening and comforting, and issues in eternal light and life; a light that will never be extinguished, and a life that will continue for ever, with never-fading joys and pleasures; see *Job xxxiii. 30.*

13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

They said this on account of his declaring himself *the light of the world*: these were either the same who went out of the temple, filled with remorse of conscience, and were now returned, and bearing him a grudge, came to take some advantage against him, if they could; or they were others of the same complexion, sent by them, to make their observations on him:

Thou bearest record of thyself] The Ethiopic version renders it, "Dost thou praise thyself?" Which does

(q) Bereshit Rabba, fol. 1. 3. Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2. & Jarchi in *Psalm. xlii. 3.* (r) Bemidbar Rabba, §. 15, fol. 217. 2.

(s) Tzeror Hammor, fol. 114. 3.

(t) T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 4. 1.

does not seem so decent and comely; see *Prov.* xxvii. 2. though it does not follow, that what a man says of himself is not truth, as these suggest:

Thy record is not true] For John testified of himself, that he was not the Christ, nor Elias, nor that prophet; but the voice of one crying in the wilderness; and this testimony he bore of himself, at the importunity of the Jews themselves, *John* i. 19—23. and his testimony was true; so was that which Christ bore of himself; but their sense rather seems to be, that it was not firm and authentic, and would not pass in any court of judicature, since no man can be a witness in his own cause.

14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

Jesus answered, &c.] In vindication of himself, and his testimony:

Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true] Which seems contradictory to what he says, in chap. v. 31. and may be reconciled thus; there he speaks of himself as man, and in the opinion of the Jews, who took him to be a mere man; and also as alone, and separate from his Father, as the context shews; therefore his single testimony, and especially concerning himself, could not be admitted as authentic among men; but here he speaks of himself as a divine person, and in conjunction with his Father, with whom he was equal; and therefore his testimony ought to be looked upon and received as firm and good, giving this as a reason for it:

For I know whence I came, and whither I go] That he was truly the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, and had his mission and commission from him into this world; and which, as he knew himself, he was able to make known, and make appear to others, by his credentials, the doctrines taught, and the miracles wrought by him; which proved him to be what he said he was, *the light of the world*; and he knew that when he had done his work he came about, he should go to his God and Father, and take his place at his right hand:

But ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go] They took him to be the son of Joseph, and that he came out of Galilee; in which they were mistaken; and when he talked of going away, they did not understand him, nor know whither he was going; they ask if he was going to the dispersed among the Gentiles, to teach them? and at another time, whether he would kill himself? They knew not, that through a train of sufferings and

death, he must, and would enter into his glory. The *Perfic* version inserts another clause without any foundation; “but ye know not from whence ye come, and whither ye go;” and then follows the former: there might be a truth in this, they did not know their true original, that they were from beneath; nor whither they were going, to what dismal abode, when they expected to enter, and enjoy the kingdom of heaven.

15 Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.

They judged according to their carnal affections and prejudices; taking the Messiah to be a temporal prince, and his kingdom to be of this world; they judged that Jesus could not be he; they looked upon him as a mere man; and seeing him in much outward meanness, in his human nature, they judged of him according to this outward appearance: or, “ye that are after the flesh judge;” to which sense the *Perfic* version agrees.

For ye are carnal] And so judged as carnal men, who are very improper persons to judge of spiritual things:

I judge no man] In the same way, after the flesh, or in a carnal manner, nor according to outward appearances, according to the sight of the eyes, or the hearing of the ears: Christ did not take upon him to judge and determine in civil affairs, or in things pertaining to a court of judicature among men; this was not his province; an instance of this there is in the context, in not condemning the woman brought to him; nor did he judge the persons and states of men, or proceed to pass any sentence of condemnation on them; he came not to condemn, but save the world; this was not his business now; otherwise, all judgment is committed to him, and which he will exercise another day.

16 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

True, because he saw not as man did, nor looked unto, and judged according to the outward appearance of things; but looked into the heart, and knew what was in it, being the searcher and trier of it; to whom all things are naked and open, and therefore cannot be deceived or imposed upon; his judgment must be sure and infallible:

For I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me] He was not separate from the Father, or at a distance from him, when he was here on earth; he was in his bosom, and in heaven, as the Son of God, when, as the Son of man, he was below: nor was he alone in his testimony and judgment, the Father joined with him therein; and which is

a farther proof of the truth of his testimony, and the certainty of his judgment;

17 It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

Written in the law of Moses, which was given unto them, and they boasted of; the passage referred to, is in *Deut. xix. 15*. see also *Deut. xvii. 6*. where, though what follows is not to be found in so many words, yet the sense is there expressed:

[That the testimony of two men is true] Concerning which the Jewish writers say (u), "They used not to determine any judiciary matter by the mouth of one witness, neither pecuniary causes, nor causes of life and death, as it is said, *Deut. xvii. 6*." It is asked (x) in their oral law, "If the testimony of two men stand, why does the scripture particularly mention three? (For no other reason) but to compare or equal three with two, that as three convict two of a falsehood, two may also convict three." On which one of their commentators (y) has this observation, taking notice of *Deut. xix. 18*. which speaks of a single witness; "Mar (a doctor) says, Where ever it is said a witness, it is to be understood of two, unless the scripture particularly specifies one." In the case of a wife suspected of adultery, and in the business of striking off the neck of the heifer in case of murder, they admitted of one witness (z).

18 I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.

As he bears witness of his Sonship, in 1 *John v. 7*. And the Father that sent me beareth witness of me] As he did, by the descent of the Spirit upon him at his baptism, and by a voice from heaven, both at that time; and at his transfiguration, and by the miracles which he wrought; and particularly he bore testimony of him long before in prophecy, that he was the light of the world, he now said he was, *Isa. xlii. 6*. so that here were two testifiers, his Father and himself; which shew them to be two distinct divine persons, and equal to each other: and now if the testimony of two men is true, firm, and authentic, and to be depended upon and received, then much more the testimony of two divine persons; see 1 *John v. 9*.

19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

[Where is thy father?] The Persian version adds, "shew him unto us;" produce this witness boasted of, let us see him; this they said in a sneering, taunting, and insulting manner; Where is thy Father? What! he is in Galilee; fetch him from thence; it is Joseph the carpenter you mean; a goodly witness indeed!

[Jesus answered, Ye neither know me nor my Father; if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also] They did not know the divine original of Christ, that he was the Son of God, and that God was his Father; they greatly boasted of their knowledge of God, but they knew him not; their ignorance of Christ shewed it: the knowledge of both go together, and *with him is life eternal*; nor can any truly know the one, without the other; and where the one is known, the other will be also; Christ is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person; so that he that has seen the one, must know the other; and indeed, no one can know the Father, but he to whom the Son reveals him: this was a severe mortification to these men of knowledge.

20 These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.

The treasury, the place where the thirteen chests stood, into which the people put their voluntary contributions for the sacrifices, and service of the temple; the Ethiopic version renders it, "at the alms-chest;" see the note on *Mark xii. 41*. The design of this observation of the Evangelist, is to suggest to us, that it was in a very public place, in the temple, openly, that Christ delivered the above words:

[As he taught in the temple] Where the Jews resorted, where his ministry was public, and he spake freely, and without reserve; in a very bold manner, with intrepidity, and without fear of man:

[And no man laid hands on him] Though they had sought to do it the day before; had sent officers to take him; and they themselves had a good-will to it; and yet they were so awed and overruled by one means, or on one account or another, that no man did it: the reason was,

[For his hour was not yet come] The time appointed for his sufferings and death:

21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.

Then

(u) Maimon, *Hilchot Eduth*, c. 5. §. 1.

(x) Maimon, *Hilchot Eduth*, c. 1. §. 7.

(y) Maimon, *Hilchot Eduth*, *ibid.* §. 2.

(z) Bartenora in *ibid.*

Then said Jesus, &c.] It may be immediately after he had said the above words; or rather, some time after, perhaps on the same day:

I go my way] Meaning, the way of all flesh, or that he should die: this way of speaking shews, that his death was certain, a determined thing; which must be, and yet was voluntary; he was not drove, nor forced, but went freely; this being the path, the way, through which he must enter into his kingdom and glory:

And ye shall seek me] That is, shall seek the Messiah, as their Deliverer and Saviour, when in distress; and whom he calls himself, because he was the true Messiah, and the only Saviour and Redeemer of his people, in a spiritual sense; otherwise they would not, nor did they seek Jesus of Nazareth:

And shall die in your sins] Or “in your sin;” so it is in the Greek text, and in the Vulgate Latin, and Persic versions; meaning, in their sin of unbelief, and rejection of him the true Messiah: the sense is, that in the midst of their calamities, which should come upon them for their sin against him, they should in vain seek for the Messiah, as a temporal deliverer of them; for their nation, city, and temple; and they therein should utterly perish for their iniquity; and their ruin would not only be temporal, but eternal: since it follows,

Whither I go ye cannot come] Signifying, that whereas he was going to his Father, to heaven and glory; to enjoy eternal happiness at his Father's right hand, in the human nature; they should never come there, but whilst many sat down in the kingdom of heaven, with their fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who should come from afar, they would be shut out, and not suffered to enter in.

22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.

Which was not only a wicked, but a foolish consequence, drawn from his words; for it by no means followed, because he was going away, and whither they could not come, that therefore he must destroy himself; this seems to be what they would have been glad he would have done, and suggested the thought that he might do it: in which they imitated Satan, *Matt. iv. 6.* under whose influence they now apparently were, and hoped that he would, which would at once extricate them out of their difficulties on his account:

Because he saith, Whither I go ye cannot come] This is no reason at all; for had Christ's meaning been, as they blasphemously intimate, they might have destroyed themselves too, and have gone after him.

23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

He said, upon this wicked remark of theirs, and query on his words:

Ye are from beneath] Not only of the earth, earthy, and so spoke of the earth, and as carnal men; but even of hell, they were the children of the devil; they breathed his spirit, spoke his language, and did his lusts, as in *y. 44.*

I am from above] Not with respect to his human body, which he did not bring with him from heaven, that was formed below, in the virgin's womb; otherwise he would not have been the seed of the woman, the son of Abraham, David, and Mary: but either with regard to his divine nature and person, he was of God, the Son of God, the only-begotten of the Father, who then lay in his bosom, and was in heaven above at that time; or to his mission, which was from heaven.

Ye are of this world] They were, as they were born into the world, sinful, carnal, and corrupt; they were in it, and belonged to it, had never been chosen, or called out of it; they had their conversation according to the course of it, and conformed to its evil customs and manners; they were under the influence of the god of the world, and were taken with the sinful and sensual lusts thereof; they were men of worldly spirits; they minded earth, and earthly things, and had their portion in this world, and might be truly called the men of it.

I am not of this world] He was in it, but not of it; he was come into it to save the chief of sinners, but he did not belong to it, nor did he conform to it; for though he conversed with sinners, eat with them, and received them, being called to repentance by him; yet he was separate from them, and did not as they did: nor did he pursue the pleasures, honours, and riches of this world, being all his days a man of sorrows, and despised of men; and though Lord of all, had not where to lay his head.

24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

He so said, because they were from beneath, and of the world, and discovered an earthly, worldly, carnal, yea, devilish disposition, in their conduct towards him:

That ye shall die in your sins] This he had said in *y. 21.* and now repeats it, and confirms it by the following reason:

For if ye believe not that I am he] The everlasting and unchangeable I AM, the true God, God over all, blessed for ever; the eternal Son of God, God manifest in the flesh, really made flesh, and become incarnate; the true Messiah, the only Saviour of sinners; the one and only Mediator between God and man; the Head of the church, Prophet, Priest, and King, and the Judge of quick and dead; as also the Light of the world he had declared himself to be: these are things that are necessary to be believed concerning Christ; indeed, carnal and unregenerate men may believe all these things; the devils themselves do, and tremble at them; but then they, and so unconverted men, have no faith in them, with an application thereof to themselves: true faith in Christ deals not with him in a general way, but in a special regard to a man's self; it is a seeing of Christ for a man's self: it is not an implicit faith, or a believing him to be what he is, merely upon report, but upon sight; it is a going out of the soul to Christ, a renouncing its own righteousness, and a trusting in him alone for life and salvation; it is with the heart, and from it, and is unfeigned; it works by love to Christ and his people, and is attended with the fruits of righteousness, and a cheerful obedience to the commands and ordinances of Christ. Though perhaps no more than a general faith is here intended; for want of which, and their rejection of Jesus as the Messiah, the Jews suffered temporal ruin; and had they but believed that Jesus was the Son of God, and true Messiah, they had been saved from that temporal destruction which came upon their nation, city, and temple; but not believing this in a general and national way, they perished, as is here threatened:

Ye shall die in your sins] In which they were, being defiled with them, guilty before God for them, under the power of them, and liable to punishment for them; and so they remained, and did remain, and were yet in their sins, even until death, when they died in them, and for them, not only a corporal, but an eternal death: for dying in their sins, these would be found upon them, and they would be charged with them, and must be answerable for them, and consequently endure the punishment of them, which is the second death. Dying in sin, and dying in Christ, are two things widely different. They that die in faith, die in Christ; they that die in unbelief, die in sin; and this is dreadful dying; see *Job. xxii. 21.* where the Targum paraphrases it, "and he, one man, (or alone) לא מור בחיביר" did not die "in his sins."

25 Then said they unto him, Who art

thou? And Jesus saith unto them, *Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.*

Who art thou, that talkest at this rate, and threatenest us with death, in case of unbelief; this they said with an haughty air, and in a scornful manner:

And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning] Meaning, either of this discourse, as that he was the *Light of the world*, and which he continued to assert; or of his being had before the sanhedrim, when he affirmed that God was his Father, and by many strong arguments proved his divine Sonship; or of his ministry, when by miracles, as well as doctrines, he made it to appear that he was he that was *to come*, the true Messiah; or who spake from the beginning to Moses, saying, *I AM that I AM, hath sent thee*; and to the church, and Jewish fathers in the wilderness; and who is that Word that was from the beginning with God; and who is called the Beginning, the first Cause of all things, and of the creation of God; and some think this is intended here.

26 I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

Being God omniscient, he knew their persons and actions, their lives and conversations, and all their sins and transgressions, which he could justly have complained of, and charged them with, and proved against them, and judged and condemned them for; but this was not his present business, he came not now to judge and condemn, but to *save*: wherefore he waved these things, and took no notice of them, leaving them to his Father, who would call them to an account, and punish them for them:

But he that sent me is true] As to his promises concerning the mission of his Son, to be the Saviour of sinners; so to his threatenings, to bring down vengeance on those that disbelieve him, and reject him:

And I speak to the world [or in the world] those things which I have heard of him] As concerning his love, grace, and mercy to those that should believe in him, so of the destruction of the despisers and rejecters of him; which things he spoke not in secret, in a corner, but publicly and openly, before all the world, to Jews and Gentiles, and to as many as were in the treasury in the temple at this time: see *John xviii. 29.*

27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

Of

Of the Father that sent him, and who was true and faithful to all he had said, whether in a way of promise, or threatening; such was their stupidity, that they did not know that he meant God the Father by him that sent him, so deriving his mission and doctrine from him; their hearts were made fat, and hardened, and their eyes were blinded. The Vulgate Latin version reads, "they did not know that he said, God was his Father;" and so Beza's most ancient copy, and another exemplar of his.

28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am *he*, and *that* I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

Upbraiding them with their ignorance, and giving them a sign, as well as pointing out the time when they, either by good or sad experience, should have knowledge of him:

When ye have lift up the Son of man] Meaning himself, who was to be lifted up upon the cross, as the serpent was upon the pole in the wilderness; and which signified the manner of death he should die, the death of the cross; and suggested, that what the Jews designed for his reproach, shame, and abasement, would be the way and means of his rise and exaltation; and this lifting him up, or crucifying him, he ascribes to them, because they would deliver him to Pontius Pilate to be condemned, and stir up the people to ask, and be importunate themselves for his crucifixion:

Then shall ye know that I am he] The Son of God, and true Messiah, as the centurion, and those that were with him did, when they observed the earthquake, and the things that were done at his death; and after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, and the pouring forth of his Spirit, many of the Jews had not only a notional, but a true and spiritual knowledge of Jesus, as the Messiah; and upon the destruction of their temple, city, and nation, and their disappointment by false Christs, they, doubtless many of them, must and did know that the true Messiah was come, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he:

And that I do nothing of myself] See the note on chapter v. 19.

But as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things] This he says, not as lessening himself, or making himself inferior to the Father, but to shew the excellency of his doctrine, and to assert the original, authority, and divinity of it; suggesting, that it was not an human doctrine, or a device of man's, or his own, as man, but was divine, and from God; see chapter vii. 16.

29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

By virtue of that near union there is between them, they being one in nature, essence, power, and glory, and by the gracious, powerful, comfortable, assisting, and strengthening presence of his Father, which he vouchsafed to him as man, and mediator:

The Father hath not left me alone] Christ, as the Word, was with the Father from all eternity, and as the Son of God, was in heaven, and in the bosom of the Father, when he, as the Son of man, was here on earth; for though he came forth from the Father into this world, by assumption of the human nature, yet the Father was always with him, and he with the Father, through the unity of the divine nature; nor did he withhold his supporting and assisting presence from him, as man; nor did he withdraw, at least he had not yet withdrawn his gracious and comfortable presence from him, though he afterwards did, when upon the cross: compare this with chapter xvi. 32.

For I do always those things that please him] By submitting to Gospel-ordinances, as to baptism, at which the Father declared his well-pleasedness in him; and by complying with the ordinances of the ceremonial law which were typical of him; and by perfectly obeying the precepts of the moral law, and bearing the penalty of it; or by suffering and dying in the room and stead of his people; all which were the will of God, and well-pleasing to him.

30 As he spake these words, many believed on him.

As he spake these words] Concerning his being lifted up, or his crucifixion, and the knowledge the Jews should then have of him; of the excellency and divinity of his doctrine, of his mission from the Father, and of the Father's presence with him, and of his always doing the things that are pleasing in his sight; which were spoken by him with majesty and authority, and came with power:

Many believed on him] As the Son of God, and true Messiah; faith came by hearing. Christ's hearers were of different sorts; some understood him not, and disbelieved, and rejected him; others had their eyes and their hearts opened, and received him and his words.

31 ¶ Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed;

Then said Jesus, &c.] For he knew instantly who they were, and when they believed on him; and

and therefore he immediately turned himself to them, and thus addressed them:

If ye continue in my word] Meaning the Gospel; called his, because he was both the author, and preacher, and sum, and substance of it: and to continue in it, is having cordially received it, to abide by it, and hold it fast, and not to be moved from it, by the temptations of Satan; the cunning of those that lie in wait to deceive; nor by the revilings and persecutions, the frowns and flatteries of men: and when men continue thus stedfast in it, and faithful to it, it is an evidence that it has come with power, and has a place in their hearts, and that they are the true followers of Christ:

Then are ye my disciples indeed] There are two sorts of disciples of Christ; some are only nominal, and merely in profession such; and these sometimes draw back from him, discontinue in his word, and go out from among his people; which shows that they never were of them, nor are the true disciples of Jesus; for the genuine disciples of Christ continue in his Gospel, hold fast to him the head, and remain with his people: which to do to the end, is an evidence of their being disciples indeed.

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Shall know either the truth of the Gospel, the truth as it is in Jesus; meaning, that they should have a larger knowledge of it, while others are ever learning, and never come to the knowledge of the truth; but the Spirit of truth should lead them into all truth, and cause them to grow and increase in Gospel-light and knowledge; or Jesus himself, who is *the way, the truth, and the life*: and the sense is, that they should know more of him, of the dignity of his person, of the nature and usefulness of his offices, of the efficacy of his blood, the excellency of his righteousness, and the fulness of his grace, and that for themselves:

And the truth shall make you free] From ignorance and error, and the prejudices of education, under which the whole nation laboured, and from the thralldom of the law.

33 ¶ They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

They answered, &c.] Not the believing Jews, whom he peculiarly addressed, but the unbelieving Jews, who were present, and heard these things:

We be Abraham's seed] This the Jews always valued themselves upon, and reckoned themselves, on this account, upon a level with the nobles and

the princes of the earth. "Says R. Akiba (a), "Even the poor of Israel are to be considered as if they were, בני חורין "noblemen," that are fallen "from their substance, because they are the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

And were never in bondage to any man] Which is a very great falsehood, for it was declared to Abraham himself, that his seed should serve in a land not theirs, and be afflicted four hundred years, as they were; and as the preface to the law which the Jews gloried in, shews, which says, that *the Lord their God brought them out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage*; and they were frequently overcome by their neighbours, the Moabites, Ammonites, and Philistines, and reduced to servitude under them, until delivered by one judge or another: and, not to take notice of their seventy years captivity in Babylon, they were at this very time under the Roman yoke, and paid tribute to Cæsar; and yet such was the pride of their hearts, they would not be thought to be in bondage; and therefore, with an haughty air, add,

How sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?] When they thought themselves, and would fain have been thought by others, to have been free already, and so to stand in no need of being made free.

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

Jesus answered them, &c.] Taking no notice of their civil liberty, to which he could easily have replied to their confusion and silence, he observes to them their moral servitude and bondage, and in the strongest manner affirms, that

Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin] Which must be understood, not of one that commits a single act of sin, though ever so gross, as did Noah, Lot, David, Peter, and others, who yet were not the servants of sin; nor of such who sin through ignorance, weakness of the flesh, and the power of Satan's temptations; and especially who commit sin with reluctance, the spirit dusting against it; nor indeed of any regenerate persons, though they are not without sin; nor do they live without the commission of it, in thought, word, or deed; and though they fall into it, they do not continue and live in it, but rise up out of it, thro' the grace of God, and by true repentance; and so are not to be reckoned the servants of sin, or to be of the devil. But this is to be understood of such whose bias and bent of their minds are to sin; who give up themselves unto it, and sell themselves to work

(a) Mishn. Bava Kama, c. 8. §. 6. & T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 86. 1. & 91. 1.

work wickedness; who make sin their trade and business and employment, and are properly workers of it, and take delight and pleasure in it: these, whatever liberty they promise themselves, are the servants of corruption; they are under the government of sin, that has dominion over them; and they obey it in the lusts thereof, and are drudges and slaves unto it, and will have no other wages at last but death, even eternal death, if grace prevent not; see *Rom. vi. 16. 2 Pet. ii. 19.*

35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.

And the servant abideth not, &c.] The servant of God, and of Christ, does, but not the servant of sin; there may be servants of sin in the house or church of God here below; and such were these Jews Christ is speaking to; but such shall not abide there for ever: some that get into this house are quickly discerned, as Simon Magus was, and are soon removed; and others that may stay longer, are sometimes suffered to fall into some foul sin, or into some gross error and heresy, for which they are cast out of the house or church of God, according to the rules of God's word; others make parties, draw disciples after them, and separate themselves, and go out of their own accord, to serve their own purposes; and others, when persecution and tribulation arise because of the word, they are offended and gone: this is the fan with which Christ sometimes winnows his floor, and removes the chaff; and those that continue longest, even to the end of their days, or of the world, or the second coming of Christ, as the foolish virgins, will then be discerned and separated; for *the ungodly shall not stand in judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous*; they shall not enter into the house above, into the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, which is Christ's Father's house: none but sons are brought to glory; these are the only heirs of salvation; others will be bid to depart, as workers of iniquity, as the servants of sin; even such who have made a profession of religion, and have been, and have had a standing in the house of God below. The allusion is to the case of servants in common; and in a literal sense, it is true both of good and bad servants: good servants do not always continue in their master's house; even an Hebrew servant, that loved his master, and would not go out free at the end of his servitude; and who, after having his ear bored, is said to serve him for ever, *Exod. xxi. 6.* yet that is for ever was but until the year of jubilee, whether near or remote, as the Jewish commentators (*b*) in general explain it; nay, if his master died before that time, he went out free; he was not obliged to

serve his son or heirs; and so say the Misnic doctors (*c*): "One that is bored is obtained by boring, and he possesses himself (or becomes free) by the year of jubilee, and by the death of his master." And to this agrees what Maimonides (*d*) says; "He that has served six years, and will not go out, lo, this is bored, and he serves until the year of jubilee, or until his master dies; and although he leaves a son, he that is bored does not serve the son; which may be learned from the letter of the words, *he shall serve him*, not his son, for ever; for his ever of the jubilee: from whence it appears, that he that is bored does not possess himself, (or is free) but by the jubilee, and by the death of his master." And one of their writers (*e*) observes, that the word rendered, *shall serve him*, is by gematry, and not his son. And among the Romans, good servants were oftentimes made free, and bad ones were turned out, and put into a workhouse, to grind corn in mills, a sort of bridewell; and such evil servants may more especially be respected, since Christ is speaking of servants of sin.

But the Son abideth ever.] The Son of God, the only-begotten Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, will always continue as a Son in his own house, as the Lord and proprietor of it; and as an high priest over it, having an unchangeable priesthood; and as he that takes care of it, provides for it, and manages all the affairs thereof, the family in heaven and in earth being named of him. And as he, so all the adopted sons of God shall continue, being pillars in this house, that shall never go out; such are no more servants, nor foreigners, but *fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God*; and being sons, are heirs, and shall never be cast out, as the bond woman and her son have been: but these being the children of the free, shall for ever enjoy the inheritance they are adopted to; once sons, always so; the relation ever continues; they will ever remain in the family; and being intitled to the heavenly estate, shall ever possess it.

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Alluding to the custom of adoption by the sons or brethren in the family, which obtained in Greece, called *adoptionis*, "the adoption of brethren," as Grotius, and others have observed; or rather to a custom among the Romans, of a son's making free, after his father's death, such as were born slaves in his house. Such a case as this is supposed (*f*); "A man having a son or a daughter by his servant-

(b) Jarchi, Aben Ezra & Ben Gersom in *Exod. xxi. 6.*

(c) *Mish. Kiddushin, c. 1. §. 1.* (d) *Hilchot Abadim, c. 3. §. 6. 7.*
(e) *Baal Hatturim in Exod. xxi. 6.* (f) *Theophilus Anta-*
censor, Institut. Imperat. Justinian. l. 1. tit. 6. §. 5. p. 33.

"maid, that which is born of her, since of a servant, is without doubt a servant: wherefore, if he (the son) should say, This is my natural brother, or my natural sister; for since my father had children by his maid-servant, whom he did not make free; and he dying, the law has made me lord of these, *ἐγὼ κύριος τῶν ἀνδραγαθῶν*, "I have made these free," because of their natural kindred." This is allowed to be a just and good reason of manumission. Now this answers very much to the case in hand. Men are homeborn slaves; the chosen people of God are such by nature; they are born in sin, and are the servants of it; Christ the Son makes them free; and then they are no more *foreigners and strangers, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God*. This suggests, that true freedom is by Jesus Christ, the Son of God; see *Gal. 4. 1*. He it is that makes the saints free from sin; not from the being of it in this life, but from the bondage and servitude of it, from its power and dominion; and from its guilt and liability to punishment for it; by procuring the pardon of their sins through his blood, and justifying their persons by his righteousness: he also makes them free, or delivers them from the captivity of Satan, by ransoming them out of his hands, taking the prey from the mighty, binding the strong man armed, and delivering them from him, and from the power of darkness, and putting them into his own kingdom: he does not indeed free them altogether from his temptations, but he preserves them by his power, from being hurt and destroyed by him: he likewise makes his people free from the law, not only the ceremonial law, which is abolished by him, but from the moral law; not from obedience to it, as it is in his hands, and a rule of walk and conversation to them, but as in the hands of Moses, and as a covenant of works, and from the rigorous exaction of it, and from seeking justification and life by it, and from its curse and condemnation: and he gives them freedom of access to God, as their Father, through his blood, and by his Spirit, and admits them to all the privileges and immunities of the church below; and gives them a right to, faith in, and an expectation of, the glorious liberty of the children of God hereafter; and such are truly Christ's freemen.

Ye shall be free indeed] This is true freedom; what the Jews boasted of, supposing what they said was right, was but a shadow of freedom in comparison of this; and that liberty which sinners promise themselves in sin, is all deceit; there is no true, solid, substantial freedom, but what is by Christ, the Son of God. Even that freedom which the children of God had under the legal

dispensation, was a servitude, in comparison of that which the saints enjoy by Christ under the Gospel-dispensation; though they were sons and heirs, yet being in nonage, differed nothing from servants, being under tutors and governors, in bondage under the elements of the world, and under the influence of a spirit of bondage unto fear; see *Gal. iv. 1-3*. *Rom. viii. 15*. but such that have received the Spirit of adoption from Christ, they are really free: they have not only the name of *children*, and of *freemen*, but they are truly such, and wholly so. Perhaps there may be some reference had to such sort of persons among the Jews, who were partly servants, and partly free: so it is said (g), "עבד שוחר פדיו" "he who is half a servant," or partly a servant, and partly free, shall serve his master one day, and himself another." And such an one, as the commentators (h) say, is one who is a servant of two partners, and is made free by one of them; or who has paid half his price to his master (for his freedom) but the other half is still due: and of one in such circumstances it is said (i), that "He that is partly a servant, and partly free, may not eat of his master's (lamb at the passover)." But now, those who are made free by Christ the Son of God, they are not in part only, but are wholly free, and have a right to all the privileges of his house, to the supper of the Lord, and to every other immunity.

37 I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.

I know that ye are Abraham's seed] In answer to the other part of the Jews' objection to Christ, and in favour of themselves, Christ owns that they were the natural seed of Abraham; for truth must be allowed to an adversary. But then this hindered not but they might be, as they were, in moral bondage to sin, and a generation of vipers, as those of them who came to John's baptism were; and might not be the sons of God, for not because they were the natural seed of Abraham, were they all the adopted Sons of God; and might be cast out of the house of God, as Ishmael was cast out of Abraham's, though he was his natural seed. And what follows, proves them to be under the power, and in the servitude of sin, and that they were the seed of the serpent that was to bruise the heel of the woman's seed, or put the Messiah to death, though they were the natural seed of Abraham:

But

(g) *Mish. Gittin, c. 4. §. 5. & Edot, f. 1. §. 13.*

(h) *Maimonides, Jarchi, & Bartenora in lb.*

(i) *Mish. Pesachim, c. 8. §. 1.*

But ye seek to kill me] Which none but such who are under the governing power of sin, are slaves unto it, and the vassals of the devil, would ever do: the reason of which is,

Because my word hath no place in you] Their hearts were barred and bolted against it, with ignorance, enmity, and unbelief; it had no entrance into them; it did not come with power to their hearts, nor work effectually in them; it had no place at all in them, much less a dwelling; had it had one, it would have produced another effect in them, even love to Christ; which the doctrine of Christ, wherever it comes with power, and takes place in the soul, brings along with it; but where it does not, as here, hatred, and indignation, envy and malice, more or less, shew themselves. This Clause is differently rendered, and so admits of different senses. The Vulgate Latin renders it, "my word does not take in you;" it did not take place in them, nor did it take with them; they could not receive it; in which sense the word is used in *Mat. xix. 17.* for the natural man cannot receive the doctrines of Christ; they are not suited to his taste; they are disagreeable to him. The Syriac version renders it, "ye are not sufficient for my word," to take it in; they were not capable of it; they could not understand it; it requires divine illumination, and a spiritual discerning, which they had not: the Persian version is, "ye are not worthy of my words;" of having the Gospel preached to them, and continued with them; they contradicting and blaspheming it, and rejecting the author of it; see *Act. xiii. 45, 46.* The Ethiopic version renders it, "my word does not remain with you;" and to the same purpose the Arabic version, "my word is not firm in you;" as soon as it was heard by them, it was caught away from them by Satan, whose children they were; it made no lasting impressions on them, but was like water spilt upon the ground: it may be rendered, "my word does not enter into you;" it did not make its way and penetrate into their hearts; for though, when attended with the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, it is *quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword*, and enters into the conscience, and penetrates to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and lays open the secret thoughts and intents of the heart; yet of itself is an insufficient means of conversion; it cannot make its own way; there must be an exertion of powerful and efficacious grace: which shows the hardness and obstinacy of the heart of man.

38 I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.

I speak that which, &c.] This is an aggravation of the sin of the Jews, in seeking to kill Christ on account of his doctrine, since it was not his own, but his Father's; was not merely human, but divine; was what he, the only begotten Son that lay in the bosom of his Father, had seen in his heart, in his purposes, and decrees, in his council, and covenant; and so was clear, compleat, certain, and to be depended on:

And ye do that which ye have seen with your father] Meaning the devil, whom, though they had not seen with their eyes, nor any of his personal actions; yet they acted so much under his influence, and according to his will, as if they had close and intimate consultation with him, and took their plan of operation from him, and had him continually before them, as their example and pattern, to copy after. The Ethiopic version reads, "what ye have heard;" and so it is read in three of Beza's copies, and in three of Stephens's.

39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

They answered, &c.] On account of his making mention of a father, whose works they did, and whom they imitated:

Abraham is our father] Meaning their only one, nor had they any other:

Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham] For who should children imitate but their parents? Abraham was a merciful, charitable, and hospitable man, as well as a man of strict justice and integrity; he feared God, believed in him, and was ready to receive every message and revelation which came from him; and they are his genuine children and offspring, who walk in the steps of his faith, charity, justice, and piety: and this is a rule which the Jews themselves give (*1*), whereby the seed of Abraham may be known: "Whoever is merciful to the creature (man), it is evident that he is of the seed of Abraham our father; but who ever has not mercy on the creature, it is a clear case that he is not of the seed of Abraham our father." And if this is a sure rule of judging, these men could not be the seed of Abraham, who were a merciless, barbarous, and cruel generation. Another of their writers (*2*) has this observation, agreeable to the way of reasoning Christ uses; "A disciple is to be judged of according to his manners; he that walks in the ways of the Lord,

(1) T. Rab. Beza, fol. 32. 2.

(2) Abarbanel Nachaleth Abot, fol. 183. 1.

"Lord, he is of the *disciples* of Abraham our father, seeing he is used to his manners, and learns of his works; but the disciple who is corrupt in his manners, though he is of the children of Israel, lo, he is not of the disciples of Abraham, seeing he is not accustomed to his manners." Whence it appears, that they say these things, not to distinguish themselves from other people who claimed a descent from Abraham, as the Ishmaelites or Saracens did; as did also the Spartans or Lacedemonians; for so writes Areus their king, to Onias the high priest of the Jews, "It is found in writing, that the Lacedemonians and Jews are brethren, and that they are of the stock of Abraham, 1 *Macc.* xii. 20, 21." But to distinguish those who were religious and virtuous among the Jews themselves, from those that were not; and so, our Lord means not to deny that the Jews, though they were evil men, were the seed of Abraham according to the flesh; but that they were not so in a spiritual sense, they did not tread in his steps, nor do the works he did. The *Perfic* version reads in the singular number, "ye would do the work of Abraham;" and if any particular work is designed, it is most likely to be the work of faith, since it was that which Abraham was famous for; and the doing of which denominated men, even Gentiles, the children of Abraham; and which the Jews were wanting in, they disbelieving and rejecting the Messiah.

40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

But now ye seek to kill me] A temper and disposition very foreign from that of Abraham's:

A man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God] To seek to kill a man is a very great crime, and punishable with death; to kill an innocent one, that hath done no sin, who was pure, holy, harmless, and inoffensive to God and man, was an aggravation of the iniquity; and to kill a prophet, and one more than a prophet, who brought a revelation from God himself, and declared the whole truth of the Gospel, and particularly that of his divine, eternal Sonship, which incensed them against him, and put them upon seeking to take away his life, still increased the sin.

This did not Abraham] The sense is not, that Abraham did not tell the truth he had heard of God; for he did instruct, and command his children after him, to walk in the ways of the Lord, which he had learned from him; but that Abraham did not reject any truth that was revealed unto him, and much less seek to take away the life of any person that brought it to him; and indeed not

the life of any man that deserved not to die: and our Lord suggests, that if he had been on the spot now, he would not have done as these his posterity did, since he saw his day by faith, and rejoiced in the foresight of it, *y.* 56. The Jew (*m*) makes an objection from these words against the Deity of Christ; "You see, says he, that Jesus declares concerning himself, that he is not God, but man; and so says Paul concerning him, *Rom.* v. 15. and so Jesus, in many places, calls himself *the son of man*: nor do we find in any place that he calls himself God, as the Nazarenes believe." To which may be replied, That Jesus does not declare in these words, nor in any other place, that he is not God; he says no such thing; he only observes, that he was a man, as he really was: nor is his being man, any contradiction to his being God; for he is both God and man; and so those that believe in him affirm: and though Christ does not in express terms call himself God, yet he owned himself to be *the Son of God*, *Mark* xiv. 61. and said such things of himself, as manifestly declared him to be God; and upon account of which the Jews concluded, that he not only made himself equal with God, but that he made himself God, *John* v. 17, 18. and chap. x. 33. Besides, he suffered himself to be called God by a disciple of his, which he would never have done, had he not been really and truly God, *John* xx. 28. yea, he seems to call himself so, when being tempted by Satan, he observed to him what is written, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God*, *Matt.* iv. 7. The reason why he so often calls himself the Son of man, is, because it was more suitable to him in his state of humiliation; and indeed, there was no need for him to assert his Deity in express words, since his works and miracles most clearly proved that he was God: and as for the Apostle Paul, though he sometimes speaks of him as a man, he also says of him, that he is *God over all, blessed for ever*; and calls him *the great God, and our Saviour*, and *God manifest in the flesh*, *Rom.* ix. 5. *Titus* ii. 13. 1 *Tim.* iii. 16.

41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.

Ye do the deeds of your father] Not Abraham, but the devil.

Then said they unto him, We be not born of fornication] Meaning either literally, that they were not a brood of bastards, children of whoredom, or figuratively, that they were illegitimate.

(m) R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 43, p. 436. & par. 1. c. 10, p. 118.

illegitimately begotten in unlawful copulation, or wedlock; or figuratively, that they were not the children of idolaters, idolatry being called fornication in scripture; but that they were the holy seed of Israel, and children of the prophets, who had retained the pure word, and the true worship of God: though in all this they might have been contradicted and confuted; to which they add,

We have one Father, even God] Israel being called by God *his son*, and *first-born*, to them belonged the adoption, in a national sense; and of this they boasted; though few of them were the children of God by special adoption, or God their Father by regenerating grace.

42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God, neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

Jesus said unto them, &c.] If ye were God's children by adoption, or discovered by the grace of regeneration that ye were born of God,

Ye would love me] For in regeneration love to Christ, is always implanted: it is a fruit of the Spirit, which always comes along with the superabounding grace of God in conversion; whoever are begotten again, according to abundant mercy, love an unseem Jesus; and where there is no love to Christ, there can be no regeneration: such persons are not born again; nor is God their Father, at least manifestatively:

For I proceeded forth, and came from God] The former of these phrases is observed by many learned men to be used by the Septuagint, of a proper natural birth, as in *Gen. xv. 4.* and chap. xxxv. 11. and here designs the eternal generation of Christ, as the Son of God, being the only-begotten of the Father, and the Son of the Father in truth and love: and the other is to be understood of his mission from him, as mediator:

Neither came I of myself] Or did not take the office to himself, without being called unto it, and invested with it, by his Father:

But he sent me] Not by force, or against the will of Christ, or by change of place, but by assumption of nature; he sent him at the time agreed upon, in human nature, to obtain eternal redemption for his people: and upon both these accounts Christ is to be loved by all regenerate persons, or who have God for their Father; both on account of his being the Son of God, of the same nature and essence with him, see *1 John v. 1.* and on account of his mission into this world, as Mediator, since he was sent, and came to be the Saviour of lost sinners.

43 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.

Why do ye not understand, &c.] My language, idiom, dialect, and form of speaking, in a figurative way; for they did not know what he meant by liberty, and bondage; and by having another father than Abraham; or by his own procession and coming forth from God:

Even because ye cannot hear my word] As they had no spiritual discerning and understanding of the doctrine of Christ, which shewed them to be carnal, and natural men, and not regenerate ones, and the children of God; so they had an aversion to it, and could not bear to hear it.

44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Ye are of your father the devil] Not of his substance, but by imitation and example; and as being under his authority and influence, his instructions and directions, and ready to follow after him, and obey his commands; the word *your* is rightly supplied, and is in some copies:

And the lusts of your father ye will do] The Syriac and Perfic versions read in the singular number, "the lust, or desire of your father;" by which may be particularly meant, his eager desire after the death of Christ, which he shewed at different times; he instigated Herod to seek to destroy his life in his infancy, and when he was just entering on his public ministry, he tempted him to destroy himself; and often stirred up the scribes and Pharisees to stone him, or kill him some other way; and at last put it into the heart of one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, to betray him: this looks as if, though the devil had a notion of the salvation of men by Christ, yet that he thought, as some erroneous men have also done, that it was only by his doctrine and example, and therefore he was in haste to get him out of the world, that he might not be useful, or any more so that way; and not by the shedding of his blood, the sacrifice of himself, or by his sufferings and death, in the room of sinners; or otherwise it is scarcely credible, that he would have sought his death so earnestly: now this self-same lust and insatiable desire after the death of Christ, prevailed in the Jews; and they were resolute and bent upon fulfilling it at any rate, nor could any thing divert them from it; this is the thing Christ is speaking of in the context, and is what fully proved the devil to be their father, and them to be his children.

He was a murderer from the beginning] He was not only spoken of from the beginning as he that should bruise the Messiah's heel, or should compass his death, but he was actually a murderer of Adam and Eve, and of all their posterity, by tempting them to sin, which brought death and ruin upon them; and who, quickly after that, instigated Cain to slay his brother; and has had, more or less, a concern in all the murders committed since; and has been in all ages, and still is, a murderer of the souls of men; and therefore is rightly called *Abaddon*, and *Apollyon*, which signify *the destroyer*: the phrase *from the beginning*, does not intend the beginning of his own creation; for he was created a holy creature, was in the truth, though he abode not in it; and was in an happy state, though he lost it: nor strictly the beginning of time, or of the creation of the world, which were some days at least before the fall of man, when the devil commenced a murderer; but it being very near it, therefore this phrase is made use of: the Syriac version renders it, "from Bere-shith," which is the first word in the Hebrew Bible, and is frequently used by the Jewish Rabbins, for the six days of the creation; and if Adam fell, as some think, the same day he was created, it might be properly said that the devil was a murderer from thence. Philo (n) speaks of *Eve's serpent*, as *αυτονομος φονικης*, "a murderer of man;" applying to this purpose the text before referred to, *Gen. iii. 15*.

And abode not in the truth] Neither in the integrity, innocence, and holiness, in which he was created; nor in veracity, or as a creature of veracity, but spake lies, and formed one, by which he deceived Eve, saying, *Ye shall not surely die*, when God had said they should: nor in the truth of the Gospel, which was, at least in part, made known unto him; particularly that the Son of God should become man, and in that nature be the head of angels and men: this he and his associates, in the pride of their hearts, not bearing that the human nature should be exalted above that of theirs, left their first estate, broke off their allegiance to God, and turned rebels against him:

Because there is no truth in him] Not that this is a reason why he continued not in the truth, for there was originally truth in him, though he abode not in it; but a reason, shewing there was none in him now, since he was fallen from it, and abode not in it; there is no truth in him, that is natural and genuine, and essential to him; and if at any time he speaks it, it is not from his heart, but because he is forced to it, or has an evil design in it:

When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own] That is genuine and natural, of his own devising, willing, and approving:

For he is a liar, and the father of it] He was a liar, as early as he was a murderer, or rather earlier; it was with a lie he deceived, and so murdered our first parents, and he has continued to ever since; he was the first author of a lie; the first lie that ever was told, was told by him; he was the first inventor of one; he was the first of that trade; in this sense the word *father* is used, *Gen. iv. 20, 21*. so the serpent is by the Cabalistic Jews (o) called, "the lip of a lie, or the lying lip."

45 And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.

Because I tell you the truth] And no lie, the whole truth of the Gospel, and particularly the truth of his divine Sonship:

Ye believe me not] To such an insatiation and judicial blindness were they given up, to disbelieve him, because he told the truth, and to believe a lie, that they might be damned; which shewed them to be the children of the devil, and under his power and influence.

46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

Which of you convinceth me of sin?] Of any immorality in life, or of any imposture, corruption, or deceit in doctrine. There were many of them that were forward enough to charge him with both scandalous sins, and false doctrines; but none of them all could prove any thing against him, so as to convict him according to law: they called him a wine-bidder, and a glutton; gave out they knew he was a sinner; charged him with blasphemy and sedition; sought to bring proof of it, but failed in their attempt:

And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?] Since as no sin in life, so no corruption in doctrine, could be proved against him, what he said must be truth; and therefore it was a most unreasonable thing in them, and shewed invincible obstinacy, not to believe him.

47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

He that is of God] Who is born, not of blood, by carnal descent from any person; or of the carnal will, or by the power of free-will, or of the will

(n) De Agricultura, p. 203.

(o) Lex, Cabalist, p. 74.

will of the best man in the world; but of God, according to his abundant mercy, of his own will, by the power of his grace; and so has God to be his Father: such an one

Heareth God's words] The doctrines of the Gospel, which have God for their author, Being of his ordaining, sending, and publishing; and his grace for the matter of them, displayed in election, redemption, justification, pardon, adoption, and eternal salvation, and his glory for the end: now a regenerate man has eyes to see into the glory, loveliness, excellency, suitableness, and usefulness of these things; and he has ears to hear, and a heart to understand them, which others have not; and therefore hears them with pleasure, receives them in the love of them, cordially embraces them by faith, and distinguishes them from the words of man; and puts such of them in practice, as requires it:

Ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God] Because God was not their Father, or they were not born of him, as they boasted; therefore they had not eyes to see, nor ears to hear, nor hearts to understand: and it may as fairly be inferred, that because they did not hear the words of God, therefore they were not of God; for these two necessarily imply each other; it looks very dark on such persons, who neither hear the doctrines of the Gospel, externally nor internally.

48 ¶ Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

Then answered the Jews, &c.] Being incensed to the last degree, that he should say they were of their father the devil, and not of God; and that he spoke the truth, and no one could convince him of sin:

Say we not well, that thou art a Samaritan?] It seems they had said so before, though it is not recorded; and now they thought themselves justified in it, since he treated them, the true sons of Abraham, in such a manner; and the rather, since he had been lately among the Samaritans, and had in a parable spoken in favour of a Samaritan: they meant by this expression, that he was an irreligious man, and one that had no regard to the law of Moses; or at least played fast and loose with religion and the law, and was for any thing, as times served: the Jews had a very ill opinion of the Samaritans on these accounts; and to call a man a Samaritan, was all one as to call him an heretic, an idolater, or an excommunicated person; for such were the Samaritans with the Jews; they charged them with corrupting the scriptures, and with worshipping idols, which were hid in

mount Gerizzim; and they give us a dreadful account of their being anathematized by Ezra, Zorobabel, and Joshua (p). And hence, because the Samaritans were had in such abhorrence by the Jews, they would not ask a blessing over food in company with them (q), nor say Amen after they had asked one (r); nor indeed, after the better sort of them had asked, unless the whole blessing was distinctly heard (s), that so they might be sure there was no heresy in it: by all which it appears, how opprobrious this name was, and what a sad character was fixed upon a man that bore it; see the note on John iv. 9. and as Christ was called by the Jews a Samaritan, they having no name more hateful and reproachful to call him by, so the christians are still in their writings called *Cuthites*, or *Samaritans*; and it is indeed with them a general name for all Gentiles and idolaters, or whom they esteem such:

And hast a devil] Familiarity and converse with one; by which means they imagined he knew their thoughts and their actions, and by his assistance performed his miracles; or they took him for a lunatic, or a madman, whose lunacy and madness proceeded from the devil, with whom he was possessed; and this rather seems to be the sense, since in x. 52. the Jews say they knew he had a devil, which they concluded from his saying, that such that observed his words and kept them should never die; which they considered as the words of a man out of his senses, seeing all men, even the best of men die, they not understanding his meaning; whereas they could not but gather from hence, that he dealt with familiar spirits; and what still confirms this sense is, that these two are joined together in John x. 20. *he hath a devil, and is mad*, and such as were demoniacs, men possessed with devils, were either mad, or lunatic, and melancholy; see Matt. xiii. 28. Mark v. 2—5. Matt. xvii. 15. compared with Mark ix. 17, 25. To which may be added, that it was a prevailing notion with the Jews, that madness and melancholy were owing to evil spirits, which had the predominancy over men: and seeing Christ was thought to be besides himself by his friends and relations, Mark iii. 21. it need not be wondered at, that his enemies should fix such a character on him; nor was this an unusual one to be given to good men; the prophets and spiritual men of the Old Testament, were accounted madmen, 2 Kings ix. 11. *Hosea ix. 7*. And since our Lord was used in this abusive manner, it need not seem strange, that his followers should be treated in the same way;

(p) Pirke Eliezer, c. 38.

(q) Bartenora in Mifl. Beracot

(r) Elias in Tishbi in voce p. 12.

(s) Mifl. Beracot, c. 8. §. 3. & Maimon, & Bartenora in ib.

way; as the apostle Paul and his companions in the ministry were, *Acts* xxvi. 24. *2 Cor.* v. 13. see *John* x. 20.

49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.

Jesus answered, I have not a devil] He takes no notice of the first charge, and scandalous character, that he was a Samaritan; it being so notorious to all the Jews, that he was not; but was, as they supposed, a Galilean, and of Nazareth; and besides, this was a term of reproach, which they gave to any man that they had no good opinion of; just as we call a man a Turk, or a Jew; not meaning that he is in fact such an one, but behaves like one: to the other Christ replies, that he had not a devil, had no conversation with one, nor was he possessed or assisted by him, nor was mad, nor acted the part of a madman: in proof of which he observes,

But I honour my Father] By ascribing his doctrine and miracles to him; by doing his will, seeking his glory, and speaking well of him; all which he would not do, had he been in confederacy with the devil; for no man can be familiar with him, or be assisted by him, and honour God; nor could a man out of his senses do all this.

And ye do dishonour me] By such wicked charges, and scandalous imputations: and the Jews, who deny Jesus to be the Messiah, and treat him in this opprobrious manner, are not the only persons that dishonour Christ; there are many that are called by his name who greatly dishonour him; some by their bad principles, and others by their evil practices: such highly reflect upon him, who deny his proper Deity, and eternal Sonship; who assert, that he is only God by office, and did not exist before his incarnation; who despise and reject his righteousness, submit not to it, but establish their own; who account his blood as common and useless, and speak disrespectfully of his sacrifice and satisfaction; and who consider his sufferings and death only as an example to men, and for the confirmation of his doctrine, but not as in the room and stead of his people, to answer and satisfy divine justice for them: and others they dishonour him, though they talk much of him, and pretend to faith in him, and love to him, and hope of eternal life by him, through their scandalous lives and conversations; dishonour his name and Gospel; give the enemy an occasion to reproach and blaspheme, and by reason of them, the ways and truths of Christ are evil spoken of.

50 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.

I seek not mine own glory] In his doctrine, or in his miracles; which shewed, that he was no impostor, but a true, faithful, and upright person; and though he was so very much reproached and abused, he was not over-solicitous of his own character, and of retrieving his honour, and of securing glory from man; he knew that wisdom was justified of her children, and he committed himself to God that judgeth righteously, who would take care of his glory, and vindicate him from all the unjust charges and insults of men:

There is one that seeketh and judgeth] Meaning God his Father, who had his glory at heart; who had glorified him on the mount, and would glorify him again, when he should raise him from the dead, and spread his Gospel in all the world; and when he would judge the nation of the Jews, and bring wrath upon them, upon their nation, city and temple, for their contempt and rejection of him.

51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

Verily, verily, I say unto you] This is truth, and may be depended upon, as coming from the Amen, and faithful witness.

If a man keep my saying] Or doctrine, receives the Gospel in the love of it; obeys it from his heart, and cordially embraces and firmly believes it; and retains and holds it fast, having a spiritual and comfortable experience of the doctrines of Christ, and yielding a cheerful and ready obedience to his commands and ordinances, in faith and love.

He shall never see death] The second death, eternal death, which is an everlasting separation of a man, body and soul, from God; this death shall have no power on such a person, he shall never be hurt by it; and though he dies a corporal death, that shall not be a curse, a penal evil to him; nor shall he always lie under the power of it, but shall rise again, and live in soul and body, for ever with the Lord: seeing and tasting death as in the next verse, are Hebraisms expressive of dying.

52 Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.

Then said the Jews unto him] Upon these last words that he spake, giving assurance, that whoever kept his saying, should not die.

Now we know that thou hast a devil] They thought and said so before, but now they were assured,

assured, that he must be under diabolical influence, must be possessed with the devil, and mad, and out of his senses; for they thought no man in his senses would ever talk at this rate:

Abraham is dead, and the prophets] That is, "they are dead also," as the Ethiopic version adds; see *Zech. i. 5.*

And thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death] Abraham and the prophets, were so far from pretending by their doctrine to communicate life and secure men from death, that they could not keep themselves from dying; and therefore it must be diabolical madness and phrensy to assert any thing of this kind.

53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?

Art thou greater than our father Abraham?] So the woman of Samaria said concerning Jacob, chapter iv. 12. The Jews had a mighty opinion of their ancestors, especially of Abraham; and yet they allow the Messiah to be greater than he, as Jesus truly was: so one of their ancient commentators (1) on those words of *Isaiah lii. 13.* thus paraphrases them: "*Behold my servant shall deal prudently, this is the king Messiah; he shall be exalted above Abraham, as it is written, Gen. xiv. 22. and extolled above Moses, as it is written, Numb. xi. 12. and he shall be higher than the ministering angels, as it is written, Ezek. i. 18. Zech. iv. 7. for he shall be אביר גורל מן greater than the fathers.*" They add here of Abraham,

Which is dead] He was a great and good man, and yet dead:

And the prophets are dead] Though they truly kept, and faithfully delivered the word of God:

Whom makest thou thyself?] Who art a poor carpenter's son, a Galilean, a Nazarene, and yet makest thyself greater than Abraham, or any of the prophets; yea, makest thyself to be God, to promise security from death, and an everlasting continuance of life, upon keeping thy word.

54 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:

If I honour myself, my honour is nothing] It is empty and vain, and will not continue; see *2 Cor. x. 18.*

It is my Father that honoureth me] By a voice from heaven, both at his baptism, and transfigu-

ration, declaring him to be his beloved Son, and by the works and miracles he did by him; as he afterwards also honoured him by raising him from the dead, and setting him at his own right hand; by pouring forth his Spirit on his disciples; and succeeding his Gospel in every place:

Of whom ye say that he is your God] Your covenant God and Father, being the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; of this the Jews boasted. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and all the Oriental versions read, *our God.*

55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I should be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.

Yet ye have not known him] Not as the Father of Christ, nor as in Christ, *whom to know is life eternal:* they had no spiritual knowledge of him, nor communion with him; nor did they know truly his mind and will, nor how to worship and serve him as they ought:

But I know him] His nature and perfections, being of the same nature, and having the same perfections with him; and his whole mind and will, lying in his bosom: nor did, or does any know the Father but the Son, and he to whom he is pleased to reveal him:

And if I should say, I know him not, I should be a liar like unto you] Our Lord still intimates, that they were of their father the devil, and imitated him not only as a murderer, but as a liar: this is quite contrary to the character they give of themselves, for they say (a), that "an Israelite will not tell a lie."

But I know him, and keep his saying] Do his will, and always the things that please him; observe his law, preach his Gospel, fulfil all righteousness, and work out the salvation of men; which were the will and work of his Father he came to do.

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day] Or "he was desirous to see my day," as the Syriac and Arabic versions rightly render the word; or "very desirous," as the Persian version: and indeed, this was what many kings and prophets, and righteous men, were desirous of, even of seeing the Messiah and his day: we often read of, *נשואו ימי משיח* "the days of the Messiah;" and the Jews in their Talmud (x), dispute much about them,

(1) Tanchuma apud Holf. p. 323.

(a) Maimon, in Misa, Pefachim, c. 8. §. 6.

(x) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 99. 1.

them, how long they will be; one says forty years, another seventy, another three ages: it is the opinion of some, that they shall be according to the number of the days of the year, three hundred and sixty-five years; some say seven thousand years, and others as many as have been from the beginning of the world; and others, as many as from Noah; but we know the day of Christ better, and how long he was here on earth; and whose whole time here is called his day; this Abraham had a very great desire to see:

And he saw it, and was glad] He saw it with an eye of faith, he saw it in the promise, that *in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed*; and when it was promised him he should have a son, which was the beginning of the fulfilment of the other, he laughed, and therefore his son was called Isaac, to which some reference is here made; he saw him in the birth of his son Isaac, and rejoiced, and therefore called his name Isaac, that is, *laughter*: he saw also Christ and his day, his sufferings, death, and resurrection from the dead, in a figure; in the binding of Isaac, in the sacrifice of the ram, and in the receiving of Isaac, as from the dead; and he not only saw the Messiah in his type Melchizedek, and who some think was the Son of God himself, but he saw the second person, the promised Messiah, in an human form, *Gen. xviii. 2.* and all this was matter of joy and gladness to him. This brings to mind what the Jews say at the rejoicing at the law, when the book of the law is brought out (y): "Abraham rejoiced with the rejoicing of the law, he that cometh shall come, the Branch with the joy of the law;" Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Samuel, David, Solomon, rejoiced with the joy of the law; he that cometh shall come, the Branch with the joy of the law."

57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

Thou art not yet fifty years old] One copy reads *forty*, but he was not that; no, not much more than thirty; not above two or three and thirty years old: the reason of their fixing on this age of fifty might be, because Christ might look like such an one, being a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs; as well as of great gravity; or they might be free in allowing him as many years, as could be thought he should be of, and gain their point; for what were fifty years, when Abraham had been dead above two thousand? and therefore he could never see Abraham, nor Abraham see him: moreover, this age of fifty, is often

spoken of by the Jews, and much observed; at the age of fifty, a man is fit to give counsel they say (z); hence the Levites were dismissed from service at that age, it being more proper for them then to give advice, than to bear burdens. A *Mesbureman*, or an interpreter in a congregation, was not chosen under fifty years of age (a); and if a man died before he was fifty, this was called "the death of cutting off (b); a violent death, a death inflicted by God, as a punishment; Christ lived not to that age, he was now many years short of it:

And hast thou seen Abraham?] If he had not, Abraham had seen him, in the sense before given, and in which Christ asserted it, and it is to be understood.

58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

Verily, verily, I say unto you] Whether it will be believed or no, it is certainly fact:

Before Abraham was, I am] Which is to be understood, not of his being in the purpose and decree of God fore-ordained to sufferings, and to glory; for so all the elect of God may be said to be before Abraham, being chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world: or that Christ was man, before Abraham became the father of many nations; that is, before the calling of the Gentiles; for nothing is said in the text about his being the father of many nations; it is a bold and impudent addition to it: and besides, Abraham was made the father of many nations, as Ishmaelites, Israelites, Hagarenes, &c. long before the incarnation of Christ; yea, he was so from the very promise in *Gen. xvii. 5.* which so runs, *A father of many nations have I made thee*; so that this appears a false sense of the text, which is to be understood of the Deity, Eternity, and Immutability of Christ, and refers to the passage in *Exodus iii. 14.* *I AM that I AM—I AM both sent me unto you, the true Jehovah*; and so Christ was before Abraham was in being, the everlasting I AM, the eternal God, which is, and was, and is to come; he appeared in an human form to our first parents before Abraham was, and was manifested as the Mediator, Saviour, and living Redeemer, to whom all the patriarchs before Abraham looked, and by whom they were saved: he was concerned in the creation of all things out of nothing, as the efficient cause thereof; he was set up from everlasting as mediator; and the covenant of grace was made

(y) *Seder Tephillot*, fol. 309. 1. Ed. Basil.

(z) *Pirke Abot*, c. 5. §. 21.

fol. 34. 2. *Juchasin*, fol. 44. 2.

Biccurim, fol. 64. 3. *T. Bab. M. ed. Katon*, fol. 28. 1.

Massecheth Semachot, c. 3. §. 9. *Kimehi in Isa.* xxxviii. 10.

(a) *T. Bab. Chag. ga.*

(b) *T. Hieros.*

made with him, and the blessings and promises of it were put into his hands before the world began; the eternal election of men to everlasting life was made in him before the foundation of the world; and he had a glory with his Father before the world was; yea, from all eternity he was the Son of God, of the same nature with him, and equal to him; and his being of the same nature proves his Eternity, as well as Deity, that he is from everlasting to everlasting God; and is what he ever was, and will be what he now is: he is immutable, the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever; in his nature, love, grace, and fulness, he is the invariable and unchangeable I AM.

59 ¶ Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

[Then took they up stones to cast at him] Supposing that he had spoken blasphemy; for they well understood that he, by so saying, made himself to be the eternal God, the unchangeable Jehovah. Should it be asked how they came by their stones in the temple? It may be replied, The temple was still building, *John* ii. 20. and stones, or pieces of stones might lie about, with which they furnished themselves, in order to have destroyed Christ: and this they attempted, though it was on the sabbath-day, as appears from chapter ix. 1, 14. and with them, *קטלה בשבת* "stoning on the sabbath-day (c)" was allowed in some cases.

[But Jesus hid himself] Not in any corner of the temple, or behind a pillar; but he withdrew himself from them directly, and made himself invisible to them, by holding their eyes, or casting a mist before them, that they could not see him:

[And went out of the temple] By one of the gates of it:

[Going through the midst of them] Not of the persons that took up stones to stone him; but the rest of the people, who were there in great multitudes to hear his doctrine, and see his miracles:

[And so passed by] And escaped out of their hands. The last words, *going through the midst of them, and so passed by*, are not in Beza's most ancient copy, and in the Vulgate Latin version.

CHAP. IX.

In this chapter we have an account of the miraculous cure of a man that was born blind, *John* ix. 1—12. they bring the man before the Pharisees, to whom he relates the same, *John* ix. 13—15. they reprove Christ as a sabbath-breaker, *John* ix. 16, 17. they send for the

parents of the young man, who refer them to their son's testimony, *John* ix. 18—23. who was called and examined, *John* ix. 24—26. he answereth, and telleth them, that Christ is no sinner, but is of God, *John* ix. 27—33. wherefore he is excommunicated, *John* ix. 34. Christ instructeth the blind man, who believeth in him, *John* ix. 35—39. and sheweth the Pharisees their spiritual blindness, *John* ix. 40, 41.

1 AND as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.

[And as Jesus passed by] The word *Jesus* is not in the Greek text, but is rightly supplied by us, as it is in the Vulgate Latin, and as the word *Christ* is in the Perfic version; for of his passing from the temple, and by the multitude that were there, and on his way to the place he designed to make to, is this said, as appears from the close of the preceding chapter; though some think this is to be understood of his passing by at another time and place, since the preceding fact of the woman's being taken in adultery, and the discourse of our Lord with the Jews, were quickly after the feast of tabernacles; whereas the following ones, both in this, and the next chapter, seem to be at the feast of dedication, chapter x. 22. which was some months after: but it may be, that the parable of the sheep, though it runs in connection with what is said in this chapter, might be delivered then; or what follows, chapter x. 22. might be said at the feast of dedication, when the parable, and what is related here, might be delivered before, seeing there is so very strict a connection between this, and the preceding chapter; and the Ethiopic version is very express, rendering it, "and departing from thence;" that is, from the temple, at that time when the Jews took up stones to stone him:

[He saw a man which was blind from his birth] Which man was an emblem of God's elect in a state of nature, who being conceived in sin, are transgressors from the womb, and so are alienated from the life of God through their ignorance and blindness: they are blind as to any true and spiritual knowledge of God in Christ; as to any true sight of sin, or sense of their own estate and condition; and with respect to Christ, and the way of peace, righteousness, and salvation by him; and as to the Spirit, and the operations of his grace, and with regard to the scriptures, and the doctrines of the Gospel: and as Christ saw this man first, and not the man him, for he was blind, so Christ first looks upon his chosen ones with an eye of love and mercy, as he passes by them, and both enlightens and quickens them, *Ezek.* xvi. 6, 8. He saw Matthew the publican first, as he passed along

(c) T. Hierof, Yom Tob, fol. 63. 2:

along, and called him from the receipt of custom to be a follower of him, *Matt. ix. 10.*

2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

And his disciples asked him] It may be that some of the twelve apostles, or others of his disciples, might put the following question to him on sight of this blind man, who by some means or another they knew was born blind:

Saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?] The first of these questions, whether the man himself had sinned before he was born, which might be the occasion of his blindness, proceeds not upon the doctrine of original sin, though the Jews then believed that; see the note on *Rom. v. 12.* since that was common to all men, and therefore could not admit of such a question; but either upon the notion of the transmigration of souls into other bodies; and so the disciples might ask whether this man had sinned in a pre-existent state when in another body, which was the reason of his blindness, or of his being put into a blind body. This notion, Josephus says (a), was embraced by the Pharisees; though, according to him, it seems, that they only understood it of the souls of good men; and if so, this could lay no foundation for such a question, unless these disciples had given into the Pythagorean notion of a transmigration of all souls, which was to be known by defects, as blindness, &c. (b) or else this question proceeded upon a principle received by the Jews, that an infant might do that which was faulty and criminal, and actually sin in the womb; of which Dr Lightfoot has given instances: the second question proceeds upon the methods which sometimes God has taken with men, by visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children; or, as the above learned writer observes, upon a notion the Jews had, that a child might suffer for what the mother did whilst it was in the womb; or on another, which prevailed among them, that there should be neither merit nor demerit in the days of the Messiah; that is, that neither the good deeds, nor bad deeds of the parents, should be imputed to their children, neither the one to their advantage, nor the other to their disadvantage: and therefore since he the Messiah was come, they ask, how this blindness should come to pass? what should be the reason of it?

3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents] Not but that both were guilty of original sin, and had committed actual transgressions; but Christ's answer is to be considered agreeable to the design of the question; and the sense is, that it was not any sin that either of them had committed, whilst he was in the womb, or previous to his birth, that was the cause of this blindness; otherwise, all such irregularities and afflictions arise from sin, and the fall of man, as does that spiritual blindness with which all mankind are attended:

But that the works of God should be made manifest in him] That is, that Christ might have an opportunity of working a miracle in the cure of him, whereby it might appear that he is truly and properly God, the Son of God, and the Messiah. And so spiritual blindness, which has followed the fall of man, takes place in the elect of God in common with others, that the power of divine grace might be displayed in bringing them out of darkness into marvellous light.

4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

I must work the works of him that sent me] This shews, that the works of God, that were to be manifest, were to be done by Christ: many were the works which the Father gave him to do; and which he undertook to perform; and therefore there was a necessity of doing them: as principally the work of redemption, by fulfilling the law, and satisfying justice: and besides this, there were the preaching of the Gospel, and doing of miracles, and among these was this of giving sight to the blind, see *Isaiah xxxv. 5.* both in a natural and spiritual sense: and with a view to this he speaks of the works he must do,

While it is day] While the day of life lasts, for in the grave there is no work nor device:

The night cometh, when no man can work] Meaning the night of death, and of the grave, and suggesting his own death hereby, that he had but a little time to be in this world, and therefore would make the best use of it, to do the will and work of his Father that sent him; and which should be a pattern to us. This life is but short, it is but as the length of a day; a great deal of business is to be done; and death is hastening on, which will put a period to all working.

5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

As long as I am in the world] Which had been now two or three and thirty years; but was not to be much longer.

(a) De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 8. §. 14. (b) Sallust; de Div. c. 20.

[*I am the light of the world*] See the note on chapter viii. 12. Though doubtless he said this with some view to the cure he was about to perform, it being agreeable to his character and work, while he was in the world.

6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

[*And when he had thus spoken*] In answer to the disciples question, and declaring his own work and office in the world, and the necessity he was under of performing it:

[*He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle*] The Misnic doctors speak (c) of *pru wa* "clay" that is spitted, or spittle clay; which their commentators say (d) was a weak, thin clay, like spittle or water; but this here was properly spittle-clay, or clay made of spittle, for want of water; or it may be rather, through choice Christ spat upon the dust of the earth, and worked it together into a consistence, like clay: or did so &c.

[*And he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay*] However, spittle, especially fasting spittle, might be thought proper in some disorders of the eyes to be used, as it was by the Jews; see the note on *Exod.* 16. yet clay was a most unlikely means of restoring sight to a man that was born blind, which might be thought rather a means of making a man blind that could see. This may be an emblem of the word of God, the eye-salve of the Gospel; which is a very unlikely means in the opinion of a natural man, who counts it foolishness, of enlightening and saving sinners; and yet by this foolishness of preaching God does save those that believe.

7 And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

[*Go wash in the pool of Siloam*] A fountain of this name is called *Siloah*, Isaiah viii. 6. and according to the Jewish writers, sometimes *Gibon* (e); and this they say (f) was without Jerusalem, though near unto it: hither the Jews went at the feast of tabernacles (g), and drew water with great rejoicing, and brought it, and poured it on the altar; the waters thereof also the priests drank for digestion, when they had eat too much flesh (h); and

this was likewise made use of to wash in, in case of uncleanness. It is said (i) of Benaiah, one of David's worthies, that "One day he set his foot upon a dead toad, and he went down to Siloah, and broke the pieces of hail, (or ice congealed together) and dipped himself." This fountain was to the south-west of Jerusalem; and was, as Josephus says, sweet and large (k); and from it were two water-courses, upper and lower, 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 30. which ran into two pools; the one was called the pool of *Siloam*, which may be the same that Josephus (l) calls the pool of *Solomon*, and is here meant, and which was situated on the south of the wall of Sion, towards the east; and the other was called the pool of *Shelah*, and which, in *Neh.* iii. 15. is called in our translation, and in some others, the pool of *Siloah*. Now both the fountain, and the pool, were without the city; and yet we read of a *Siloah* in the midst of the city (m). This blind man was sent, not to wash himself all over, but only his face or eyes; and so the Arabic and Persian versions read, "wash thy face," the clay from it. This may be emblematical of the grace of the Spirit, sometimes signified by water and washing, which accompanying the word, makes it effectual to the salvation of souls:

[*Which is by interpretation, Sent*] This interpretation of the word *Siloam* does not determine which of the pools is meant, the upper or lower, *Siloah* or *Shelah*, since they both come from the word *shl* which signifies to *send*; but by the slection of the word, the upper pool *Siloah* seems plainly intended, which was not so forenamed, as Nonnus suggests, from the sending this man thither, but rather from the sending forth its waters, which flowed softly and gently for the supply of the city of Jerusalem. Some think Christ gave this interpretation of it with a view to himself, as the *sent* of God, the true Messiah; but the words seem not to be the words of Christ, but of the Evangelist, who interprets this word; wherefore they are left out in the Syriac and Persian versions, where such an interpretation was needless.

[*He went his way therefore and washed, and came seeing*] He did as he was commanded; he was obedient to the directions and orders of Christ, though they seemed so unlikely to answer the end; and yet that was brought about through the divine power of Christ, which appeared the more in making use of such unlikely means.

8 ¶ The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, aid, Is not this he that sat and begged?

(c) Misn. Mikvaot, c. 7. §. 1.

Bartenora in ib.

(d) Targum, Jarchi, Kimchi, & Solomon ben Melech in 2 Kings 1. 33.

(e) Bartenora in Misn. Succa, c. 4. §. 9.

(f) Abot R. Nathan, c. 35. fol. 8. 3.

(g) Jarchi, Maimon. &

(h) Targum, Jarchi, Kimchi, & Solomon ben Melech in 2 Kings 1. 33.

(i) Jarchi & Maimon. ibid.

(k) Misn. ibid.

(l) Targum in 2 Chron. 11. 22.

(m) c. 4. §. 1.

(n) T. Hieros. Chagiga, fol. 76. 1.

(o) De Bello Jud. l. 5.

(p) Ib. l. 6. c. 6. vel l. 5. c. 4. §. 2.

The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him] For it seems the blind man was not a stranger, one that came out of the country to the city to beg; but a native of Jerusalem, that had long lived in a certain neighbourhood in it, and was well known to be what he was;

That he was blind] The Alexandrian copy, and one of Beza's exemplars, and the Vulgate Latin version read, "that he was a beggar;" to which agree the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions: wherefore

They said, Is not this he that sat and begged?] They particularly remark his begging posture; he was not laid all along, as the lame man in Acts iii. 2. nor did he go from door to door, as others were used to do, but he sat in some certain place, as blind men generally did; see *Matt. xx. 30.*

9 Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he.

Some said, This is he] It is the same man that was blind, and begged:

Others said] In one of Beza's copies it is added *no*, and so read the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions; though they owned and said,

He is like him] This discourse of the neighbours concerning the blind man restored to sight, resembles the talk that generally is among relations, acquaintance, and neighbours, when any one belonging to them is called by grace, and converted; saying, What is come to such an one? Is he mad or melancholly? He is not the man he was; he is scarcely the same: Is it he, or another? What is the matter with him?

But he said, I am he.] And so put an end to the dispute between them, by his frank acknowledgment that he was the blind man, and the beggar they before knew as such. So persons enlightened by the Spirit of God, and effectually called by his grace, are very free and ready to acknowledge what they were before conversion; what poor, blind, and miserable, and contemptible creatures they were: Matthew owns himself to have been a publican; and Paul confesses he was a blasphemer, a persecutor, an injurious person, and the chief of sinners.

10 Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?

Therefore said they unto him] When the case was clear, and it was out of question that he was the man:

How were thine eyes opened?] Or made to see? They might well ask this question, since such a thing was never known before, that one born blind received his sight; and as great a miracle it is in

grace, and as great a mystery to a natural man, how one should be born again, or be spiritually enlightened.

11 He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.

A man that is called Jesus] Whom he had as yet little knowledge of, only by some means or another he had learned his name:

Made clay and anointed mine eyes, &c.] See the notes on *y. 6, 7.*

12 Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.

Where is he?] For Christ had withdrawn himself and was gone; whether on account of the Jews, who he knew would be irritated by this miracle, or whether to avoid all popular applause and glory, which he sought not, is not certain; it may be on both accounts: this question, however, was put, not out of good-will to Christ, but that they might apprehend him, and bring him before the sanhedrim, for doing work on the sabbath-day; and such enmity there is in carnal men, at the conversion of sinners, their acquaintance, instead of rejoicing at it:

He said, I know not] For when he returned from the pool, Jesus was gone. And so it sometimes is, that when Christ has wrought a good work of grace upon the heart, he withdraws himself for a while, and the converted sinner knows not where he is.

13 ¶ They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.

They brought to the Pharisees] That is, to the sanhedrim, which chiefly consisted of Pharisees; and so Nonnus calls them the priests and chief priests:

Him that was aforetime blind] To be examined by them. And something like this is the method used by carnal relations and friends, who when they have any belonging to them under a work of grace, have them to their learned doctors of a different religion, to talk to them, and dissuade them from the ways of truth and godliness.

14 And it was the sabbath-day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.

And it was the sabbath-day when Jesus made the clay] Which was reckoned a violation of the sabbath, *y. 16.* and was one reason why they had the

the man to the Pharisees to be examined, and why they were desirous of knowing where Jesus was :

And opened his eyes] By putting on the clay, and sending him to wash in the pool of Siloam : nor did the miracle, nor the good done to the man, excuse with them what they thought a breach of the sabbath.

15 Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.

Then again the Pharisees asked him] Not that they had put any question of this kind to him before ; but they also, as well as the neighbours, inquired of him,

How he had received his sight] From whom, and by what means ?

He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see] This account agrees with the matter of fact, and with that he gave to his neighbours : he did not vary as to the truth of the relation ; but this is somewhat more concise and short ; and it is reasonable to suppose, that the Pharisees had talked much with him before, which made it less necessary to be more particular ; for he makes no mention of the name of Jesus, nor of his making the clay, and the manner of it, nor of the pool of Siloam, nor of his orders to go there and wash ; see the notes on *v. 6, 7*.

16 Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath-day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles ? And there was a division among them.

Wherefore said some of the Pharisees] Or sanhedrim, for they were not all of one mind, as appears by what follows :

This man is not of God] Meaning, not the blind man, but Jesus ; and their sense is, he is not sent of God, he does not come from him to do his will and work, nor does he seek his glory, nor is he on his side, or for his interest ;

Because he keepeth not the sabbath-day] This they concluded from his making clay of spittle, and spreading it on the blind man's eyes, which was contrary to the traditions of their elders : one of whose rules and canons is (*n*), that "It is forbidden to put fasting-spittle even on the eye-lid on a sabbath-day." An eye-salve, or a

plaster for the eye, if it was put on for pleasure, was lawful, but not for healing (*o*) : but if it was put on on the evening of the sabbath, it might continue on the sabbath-day (*p*).

Others said, How can a man that is a sinner] Or a sabbath-breaker,

Do such miracles ?] As curing a man born blind, the like of which was never heard : those that reasoned after this manner may be supposed to be Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea.

And there was a division among them] Even in the sanhedrim, they could not agree about the character of the person that had done this miracle.

17 They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes ? He said, He is a prophet.

They say unto the blind man again] After they had discoursed among themselves, and could not agree about the author of the miracle, they turn to him that had been blind, who is called the blind man, because he had been so, and ask him his sentiments of him :

What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes ?] The question seems, at first sight, as if it was, whether Jesus had opened his eyes or no ; but by the answer it appears, that it required his thoughts of him, "who hath opened thine eyes," as the Vulgate Latin and Persic versions read ; or "seeing, or because he hath opened thine eyes," as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions :

He said, He is a prophet] The Syriac and Persic versions read, "I say, He is a prophet ;" or "he is certainly a prophet," as the Arabic version. The Jews were wont to conclude a man's being a prophet from miracles wrought by him ; see chapter vi. 14, and vii. 31, though it does not appear that he believed him, as yet, to be that prophet, or the Messiah, that was to come ; see *v. 36*.

18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.

But the Jews did not believe concerning him] Not Jesus, but the blind man ;

That he had been blind, and received his sight] They imagined there was a fraud in the case, that it was a juggle between Jesus and this man ; that he was a man who had never been blind, but only had given out that he was, and pretended he had now received his sight from Jesus, on purpose to spread his fame, and induce people to believe he

(*n*) T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 14. 4. & Avoda Zara, fol. 40. 4. & T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 103. 2. & Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat, c. 21. §. 25.

(*o*) Piske Tosephot Sabbat, art. 67. fol. 3. 4. Maimon, ibid.

(*p*) T. Hieros. Sabbat,

was the Messiah; and in this imagination they endeavoured to strengthen themselves and others:

Until they called the parents of him that had received his sight] They sent messengers to them, and summoned them before them, that they might examine them about this matter; hoping they might get something out of them, which might detect the supposed fraud; and bring Jesus under disgrace.

19 And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see?

And they asked them, saying, Is this your son?] The first question they put was, whether the man that stood before them, pointing to him, was their son or no; whether they knew him by any marks to be their son, and would own him as such: had they answered to this in the negative, they would have got an advantage against him, and would have convicted him of a lie, since he had given out that he was the son of such parents; and proving such a lie upon him, would at once have brought the whole affair into suspicion at least: they add,

Who ye say was born blind?] This contains a second question, whether, if this was their son, he was born blind or no; and if he was not born blind, though he had been blind, it would have greatly lessened the miracle: and besides, they would have put other questions upon this, whether his blindness was real, and by what means it came? Next follows a third question,

How then doth he now see?] By what means has he received his sight? They might hope, that if he was their son, and was really born blind, that he had his sight some other way than by Jesus; or they might object this to his being born blind, as being a thing impossible, or at least not credible, that he should ever see, was that the case.

20 His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:

His parents answered them, and said] What follows, which contains distinct answers to the several questions: and to the first they reply very freely, and with great confidence;

We know that this is our son] For though his receiving his sight made a considerable alteration in him, yet his features were the same; and there might be some marks in his body, which they were acquainted with, by which they knew assuredly he was their son: and if even the neighbours, though they disagreed about him, yet some of them knew him to be the same person that had been

blind and begged, then much more his parents; and even those who said it was not he, yet they owned he was like him: and with respect to the second question they answer,

And that he was born blind] This they were ready to attest, and did attest.

21 But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.

But by what means he now seeth, we know not] As to the third question they could say nothing to it, they were not present when the cure was wrought, and knew nothing of the matter, but what they had heard from their son, or from others, or both:

Or who hath opened his eyes we know not] They had heard that it was Jesus, and their son had doubtless told them it was he; but since they could say nothing of their own personal knowledge, they chose not to say any thing of him:

He is of age] At man's estate, as with the Jews, one was who was at the age of thirteen years, if he could produce the signs of puberty: and such an one was allowed a witness in any case, but not under this age; nor if he was arrived to it, if the above signs could not be produced (q). This man very likely was much older, as may be thought from the whole of his conduct, his pertinent answers, and just reasoning: wherefore his parents direct the sanhedrim to him for an answer to their third question,

Ask him: he shall speak for himself.] Or of himself, as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions render it: their sense is, he is capable of giving an account of himself in this matter, and he will do it, and let him do it; put the question to him, and a proper answer will be returned; and so they left the affair to be issued in this way.

22 These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

These words spake his parents] These were the answers they returned to the three questions put to them: and the reason why they answered in the manner they did to the third, was,

Because they feared the Jews] The Jewish sanhedrim, otherwise they were Jews themselves:

For

(q) Maimon, Hilchot Eduth, c. 9. §. 7.

For the Jews had agreed already] The sanhedrim had made a decree, either at this time, upon this account, or some time before,

That if any man did confess that he was Christ] That Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah,

He should be put out of the synagogue] Which was not that sort of excommunication which they called נידוי *Niddui*, a separation from civil society for the space of four cubits, and which held but thirty days, if the person repented; if he did not, it was continued to sixty days; and after that, in case of non-repentance, to ninety days; and if no amendment, then they proceeded to another excommunication called חרם *Cherem*, or שמתה *Shammatha*, whereby such were anathematized, and cut off from the whole body of the Jewish church and people, called sometimes *the synagogue and congregation of Israel* (r); and this struck great terror into the minds of the people; and this was what intimidated the parents of the blind man, being what is intended here. Though these are sometimes put one for another, and signify the same thing; and he that was under the former of those censures, is said to be, מבודל מן ציבור "separated from the congregation (s)," a phrase by which the word here used may be very well rendered: but in some things there was a difference between them; the one was without cursing, the other with; he that was under *Niddui*, might teach others the traditions, and they might teach him; he might hire workmen, and be hired himself: but he that was under *Cherem* might neither teach others, nor they teach him; but he might teach himself, that he might not forget his learning; and he might neither hire, nor be hired; and they did not trade with him, nor did they employ him in any business, unless in very little, just to keep him alive (t); yea, the goods which he was possessed of, were confiscated, and which they conclude should be done from (u) *Exra* x. 8. which may be compared with this passage; so that this greatly and chiefly affected them in the affairs of civil life, and which made it so terrible: for I do not find that they were obliged to abstain from the temple, or temple-worship, or from the synagogue, and the worship of it; and which is the mistake of some learned men: it is certain, they might go into places of worship, though with some difference from others; for it is said (w), that "All that go into the temple, go in, in the right hand way, and go round, and come out

"in the left, except such an one to whom any thing has befallen him, and he goes about to the left; (and when asked) Why dost thou go to the left? (he answers) Because I am a mourner; (to whom it is replied) He that dwells in this house comfort thee: (or) מנחה "because I am excommunicated;" (to whom they say) He that dwells in this house put it into thy heart, (that thou mayest hearken to the words of thy friends, as it is afterwards explained) and they may receive thee." And it is elsewhere said (x), that "Solomon, when he built the temple, made two gates, the one for bridegrooms, and the other for mourners and excommunicated persons; and when any one came in at the gate of mourners, and his upper lip was not covered, they knew, שחיר מנחה "that he was excommunicated," and said unto him, He that dwells in this house comfort thee, and put it into thy heart to hearken to thy friends." And it is afterwards also said in the same place, that when the temple was destroyed, it was decreed that such persons should come into synagogues and schools; but then they were not reckoned as members of the Jewish church, but as persons cut off from the people of Israel, and scarce allowed to be of their commonwealth. And it may be further observed, that excommunication with the Jews was not only on religious accounts, but on civil accounts; on account of money, or when a man would not pay his debts, according to the decree of the sanhedrim (y). The twenty-four reasons of excommunication, given by Maimonides (z), chiefly respect contempt of the sanhedrim, and of the wise men, and breach of the traditions of the elders; sometimes they excommunicated for immorality, particularly the Essenes, as Josephus relates, who says (a), "That such who are taken in grievous sins, they cast them out of their order; and he that is so dealt with commonly dies a miserable death; for being bound by oaths and customs, he cannot eat the food of others, and so starves." The same is reported (b) by R. Abraham Zachuth: and sometimes excommunication was for Epicurism, for heresy; and such they reckoned the belief of Jesus of Nazareth, as the Messiah; on account of which this decree was made, and which continued with them; for not only this blind man was cast out of the synagogue by virtue of it, but our Lord tells his disciples, that they should be so treated by the Jews after his death; and we find it remained

(r) Vid. Maimon. Talmud Tora, c. 7. §. 6. Buxtorf. Lex.

Rab. col. 1303. & Epist. Heb. Institut. p. 57.

(s) Maimon. Hilchot Talmud Tora, c. 7. §. 4.

(t) Ibid. §. 5.

(u) T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 16. 1.

(w) Misn. Middot, c. 2. §. 2.

(x) Pirke Eliezer, c. 17.

fol. 16. 1. & Gloss. in ib.

c. 6. §. 14.

(b) Juchasin, fol. 139. 2.

(y) T. Bab. Moed Katon,

fol. 16. 1. & Gloss. in ib.

(z) Hilchot Talmud Tora,

c. 6. §. 14. (a) De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 3. §. 8.

maintained in force and practice many hundreds of years afterwards. Athanasius (c) relates of a Jew, that lived in Berytus, a city in Syria, between Tyre and Sidon, that an image of Christ being found in his house by another Jew, though unknown to him; and this being discovered to the chief priests and elders of the Jews, they cast him out of the synagogue. Sometimes this sentence was pronounced by word of mouth, and sometimes it was delivered in writing: the form of one is given us by Buxtorf (d), out of an ancient Hebrew manuscript; and a dreadful shocking one it is. There were many rites and ceremonies, which in process of time were used, when such a sentence was pronounced, as blowing of horns and trumpets, and lighting candles, and putting them out: hence, trumpets are reckoned (e) among the instruments of judges. It is said (f) of R. Judah, that being affronted by a certain person, he resented the injury, and brought out the trumpets and excommunicated him: and they tell us (g), that Barak anathematized Meroz, whom they take to be some great person, with four hundred trumpets: and they also say (h), that four hundred trumpets were brought out, and they excommunicated Jesus of Nazareth; though these words are left out in some editions of the Talmud. Now this was done in order to inject terror both into those that were guilty, and also into the whole congregation of the people, that they might hear and fear; for the *Cherem*, or that sort of excommunication which goes by that name, was done publicly before the whole synagogue, all the heads and elders of the church being gathered together; and then candles were lighted, and as soon as the form of the curse was finished, they were put out, as a sign that the excommunicated person was unworthy of the heavenly light (i). Very likely the Papists took their horrible custom from hence of cursing with bell, book, and candle.

23 Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.

See the note on *x. 21.*

24 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.

Then again called they the man that was blind] That had been blind. After they had examined his parents, and could get nothing from them for

their purpose, they try a second time what they could do with the son:

And said unto him, Give God the praise] A phrase used when confession of sin was required; see *Josua vii. 19.* and this may be the meaning of it here; confess this fraud and imposture before the omniscient God, the searcher of hearts, and in so doing glorify that perfection of his. One and the same word, *וָיָתַן* signifies both to *confess* the truth of any thing, as a sinful action, *Prov. xxviii. 13.* and to *give thanks* and praise to God for any mercy and blessing, *Psal. xlv. 17. Dan. ii. 23.* Some take this to be the form of an oath, and that the Pharisees adjured the man by the living God, that he would tell the truth, and discover the cheat and collusion used in this affair of receiving his sight; and thought hereby to have deterred him from speaking of this benefit he had received from Christ, especially in such a manner as to reflect any honour upon the author of it. Or the sense may be, "If this really is matter of fact, that thou wast born blind, and hast received thy sight by the means of this man, give all the glory of it to God, to whom alone it is due, and not to him." God sometimes works by wicked instruments, when the glory of what is done ought not to be ascribed to them, but to him.

We know that this man is a sinner] This they concluded from his breaking the sabbath, as they supposed; though they also aspersed his character, and accused him of other things, yet falsely; see *Mat. xi. 19. Luke xxiii. 2.* nor could they prove one single instance of sin in him, though they express themselves here with so much assurance.

25 He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.

He answered and said] That is, the man who had been blind, who takes no notice of the confession they pressed him to, which is what he could not do; there being no collusion in this case, he only replies to the reproachful character they had given of his benefactor.

Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not] Or "if he is a sinner I know not," as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; suggesting, that he did not know he was a sinner; he could not charge him with being one; nor could he join with them in saying he was a sinner; nor did he think and believe he was: however, he was sure he had done a good thing to him, and in that he was no sinner; and what proof they had of his being one he could not tell: and be that as it will, adds he,

One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see] As if he should say, Whatever charges you bring

(c) Oper ejus, tom. 2. p. 12, 17. Ed. Comriellin. (d) Lex. Rab. col. 322. (e) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 7. 2. (f) T. Bab. Kiddushin, c. 4. in Beth Hrael, fol. 57. 1. (g) T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 16. 1. & Shevuot, fol. 36. 1. (h) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 107. 2. Ed. Venet. (i) Buxtorf. Epist. Heb. Institut. c. 6. p. 56.

bring against the person that has done me this favour, which I am not able to answer to, you cannot reason me out of this; this I am sure of, that once I had no eyes to see with, and now I have, and that by the means of this man you reproach. And so it is with persons enlightened in a spiritual sense, whatever things they may be ignorant of, though they may not know the exact time of their conversion, nor have so much Gospel-light and knowledge as others, or be so capable of expressing themselves, or giving such a distinct and orderly account of the work of God upon them as some can, nor dispute with an adversary for the truths of the Gospel, nor have that faith of assurance, and discoveries of God's love, and the application of such great and precious promises as others have; yet this they know, that they were once *blind*, as to the knowledge of spiritual things, as to a saving knowledge of God in Christ, as to a true sight and sense of themselves, their sins and lost estate, as to the way of righteousness and salvation by Christ, or the work of the Spirit of God upon their souls, or as to any true and spiritual discerning of the scriptures, and the doctrines of grace in them: but now they are comfortably assured, they see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the plague of their own hearts, the insufficiency of their righteousness to justify them before God, and the beauty, fulness, suitableness, and ability of Christ as a Saviour; and that their salvation is and must be of free grace; and that they see the truths of the Gospel in another light than they did before, and have some glimpse of eternal glory and happiness, in the hope of which they rejoice.

26 Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?

Then said they to him again] Finding they could not bring him to deny the fact, nor cause him to entertain an ill opinion of him that did it, they examine him again about the manner of it:

What did he to thee? How opened he thine eyes?] These questions they had put before, ver. 15. and proposed them again, in hope he would vary in the account, which they would not fail of improving against him; or that it would appear that he had not been really blind, at least from his birth; or that Christ made use of some unlawful means, as magic art, which they were always ready to charge him with, and to impute his miracles to a diabolical familiarity and influence; and they would have been glad to have had something to support such a calumny.

27 He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore

would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?

He answered them, I have told you already] As he had, *ver. 15.*

And ye did not hear] The Vulgate Latin version reads, "and ye have heard;" and so some copies of Stephens's; that is, an account had been given of the manner how his eyes were opened, and they had heard the account with their bodily ears, though not with the ears of their minds; and therefore, according to most copies and versions, it is read, "ye did not hear;" did not regard it, or give credit to it; and so the Persic version renders it, "and ye have not believed;" they would not believe the man had been blind, until they sent for his parents; much less would they believe the account of his cure:

Wherefore would ye hear it again?] Once is sufficient, especially since the former account has been disregarded and discredited: their view could not be their own information, but to baffle and confound the man, if they could. The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, leave out the word *again*, and only read, "wherefore would ye hear?" What end can you have in it? Of what avail would it be? Or what purpose can be answered by it?

Will ye also be his disciples?] As many whom you call ignorant and accursed people are, and as I myself desire to be. This he might say either in an ironical and sarcastic way; or else seriously, suggesting, that if they were willing to examine into this fact, with upright views and sincere intentions, that should it appear to be a true miracle, they would become the disciples and followers of Jesus, then he would, with all his heart, relate the account to them over and over again, or as often as they pleased.

28 Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.

Then they reviled him] Called him an impertinent; saucy, impudent fellow, for talking in this pert manner to them, the great sanhedrim of the nation; or, as the Vulgate Latin version reads, "they cursed him;" they thundered out their anathemas against him, and pronounced him an execrable and an accursed fellow:

And said, Thou art his disciple] For they looked upon it as a reproach and scandal to be called a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth; though there is nothing more honourable than to be a follower of him, the Lamb, whithersoever he goes: wherefore these Jews threw off what they thought a term of reproach from themselves to the blind man; and perhaps they might say this to ensnare him,

him, hoping that he would own himself to be a disciple of Jesus, and profess him to be the Christ, that they might, according to their own act, excommunicate him. The Vulgate Latin, Perfic, and Ethiopic versions read, "be thou his disciple," if thou wilt; we despise the character; far be it from us that we should be followers of him:

But we are Moses' disciples] Thus they preferred Moses to Christ, and chose to be the disciples of Moses the servant, rather than of Christ the Son; though indeed they were not the genuine disciples of Moses; for if they had, they would have been the disciples of Christ, and believers in him, since Moses wrote and testified of him: they might indeed be so far the disciples of Moses, or of his law, since they sought for righteousness and justification by obedience to his law. This was a phrase in use among the Jews: so the Targumist (i) on *Numbers* iii. 2. says, "These are the names of the sons of Aaron, the priests, ומשרי תלמידי משה the disciples of Moses, the master of the Israelites;" particularly the Pharisees, as here, claimed this title to themselves: for it is said (t), "All the seven days (before the day of atonement) they delivered to him (the high priest) two of the disciples of the wise men, to instruct him in the service (of that day), who were, מחלמיו של משה "of the disciples of Moses," in opposition to the Sadducees." From whence it appears, that these disciples of Moses were of the sect of the Pharisees, who assumed this character as peculiar to themselves. Sometimes they call themselves the disciples of Abraham, though the description they give of such, by no means belongs to them; see the note on chapter viii. 39. They say (i), "Whoever has three things in him, is מחלמיו של אברהם "of the disciples of Abraham our father;" he that has a good eye, (beneficence, or temperance, or contentment) a lowly spirit, and an humble soul, he is of the disciples of Abraham our father." But the contrary best agrees with those very persons, who would be thought to be the disciples of Abraham and of Moses.

29 We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.

We know that God spake unto Moses] Out of the bush, and told him who he was, and sent him to deliver the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage; and spoke the ten words, or Law unto him, and by him delivered them to the children

of Israel; and to whom he spake *face to face*, as a man does to his friend, and mouth to mouth, and not in dark sayings. They mean, they knew that Moses had his mission, commission, and credentials from God: but

As for this fellow] So they contemptuously called the Lord Jesus Christ,

We know not from whence he is] Contradicting what others of them had said, chapter vii. 27. They imagined they knew the country from whence he came, which they supposed to be Galilee, and the place where he was born, which they concluded was Nazareth; though in both they were in the wrong; and they knew his parents, Joseph and Mary, and his brethren and sisters; but as to his divine filiation, they knew nothing of it; nor would they own his mission, commission, and credentials to be from heaven; and pretended they had no reason to conclude they were.

30 The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.

The man answered and said unto them] Very appositely and pertinently,

Why herein is a marvellous thing] Strange and unaccountable,

That ye know not from whence he is] That you learned doctors, men of sagacity and penetration, should not be able to discern that this man is of God, is a prophet sent by him, and that there should be any doubt from whence he comes, or from whom he has his commission:

And yet he hath opened mine eyes] Which was so clearly and plainly the work of the Messiah, and to be done by him when he came, *Isaiah* xxxv. 4, 5. and chap. xlii. 7.

31 Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

Now we know that God heareth not sinners] All mankind are sinners, even God's elect; yea, such who are truly gracious and righteous persons; for there is no man without sin; and God hears such who cry unto him day and night; such Christ came to save; for such he died; and these he calls to repentance; and every penitent sinner God hears: but by *sinners* are here meant notorious sinners, such in whom sin reigns, who live in sin, and particularly impostors. The man takes up the word the Jews had made use of, and applied to Christ, *John* 8. 24. and suggests, that had Jesus

(i) Jonathan ben Uzziel in ib. fol. 4. 2.

(t) T. Bab. Yoma,

(i) Pirke Abot, c. 5. §. 19.

Jesus been a *sinner*, that is, an impostor, God would not have heard him, nor have assisted him in doing a miracle to support an imposture, or cover and encourage a fraud; but that he was heard and assisted, was a plain case: whereas not only they, the learned doctors of the nation, but such an illiterate man as himself knew, that notoriously wicked men, cheats, and deceivers, were not heard of God; and this was known from the scripture, and all experience; see *Psalms* lxvi. 18. *Isaiah* i. 15. The *Perfic* and *Ethiopic* versions read, "I know that God," &c.

But if any man be a worshipper of God] Fears the Lord, and worships him in spirit and in truth, both with internal and external worship:

And doth his will] For it is not every one that says Lord, Lord, or draws nigh to God with his mouth, and honours him with his lips, that is a true and sincere worshipper of him; but he that does his will in faith, from a principle of love, and with a view to his glory:

Him he heareth] For he is nigh to all that call upon him in truth; and such an one the man intimates Jesus must be, since it was out of all dispute that God had heard him, and had bore a testimony to him.

32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

Since the world began] *Ex tu auro*, "from eternity, or never;" the phrase answers to *עולם* frequently used by the Jews (*m*), for never; and so the *Arabic* version renders it, "it was never heard," &c. since time was:

Was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind] As not any physician by any natural means, or art, so not any prophet in a miraculous way, no not Moses himself; among all the miracles he wrought, which the Jews say (*n*), were seventy-six, and which were two more than were wrought by all the prophets put together, this is not to be found in the list of them, nor in the catalogue of miracles done by others. Elisha indeed prayed to God to restore sight to an army smitten with blindness; but then they were persons who saw before, and were not blind from their birth. Wherefore it must follow, that Jesus, the author of this miracle, must be greater than any of the prophets, even than Moses himself, and has a greater confirmation of his mission from God, than either he or they had: and as this was a miracle in nature, it is no less a miracle in grace,

that one born in the blindness and darkness of sin, ignorance, and infidelity, should have the eyes of his understanding opened, to behold divine and spiritual things.

33 If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.

If he had not his mission, commission, and credentials from God; if he had not been sent by him, and had not authority from him, and was not assisted by him, as man, or God was not with him,

He could do nothing] Or "not do these things," as the *Syriac* version reads; that is, such miraculous works; or, as the *Perfic* version, "he could not do this miracle;" open the eyes of a man born blind. His doing this is a full proof that he is of God, and comes from him.

34 ¶ They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

They answered, &c.] Being nettled, and stung at what he said, and not able to confute his reasoning; and it is amazing that a man that could never read the scriptures, who had had no education, was not only blind, but a beggar from his youth, should be able to reason in so strong and nervous a manner, and should have that boldness and presence of mind, and freedom of speech before the whole sanhedrim. Certainly it was God that gave him a mouth and wisdom, which these learned doctors could not resist, and therefore they reply in the following manner,

Thou wast altogether born in sins] Meaning not in original sin, as all mankind are, for this might have been retorted on themselves; but having imbibed the Pythagorean notion of a transmigration of souls into other bodies, and of sinning in a pre-existent state, or a notion of infants sinning actually in the womb, and so punished with blindness, lameness, or some deformity or another for it, they reproach this man, calling him vile miscreant; saying, "Thou vile, sinful creature, who came into the world covered with sin, with the visible marks of having sinned, either in another body, or in the womb before birth, and therefore wast born blind:

And dost thou teach us] Us holy, wise, and learned men!" Which breathes out the true pharisaical spirit they were possessed of, and which appeared in their ancestors before them; see *Isaiah* lxxv. 5. *Luke* xviii. 9.

And they cast him out] Not merely out of the place where the sanhedrim sat, or out of the temple; this would have been no great matter; nor

(m) Abot R. Nathan, c. 35. fol. 8. 2. Maimon Mechira, c. 20. §. 8. & Shelchim & Shotaphim, c. 10. §. 1, 2, 3, 4. & passim.

(n) Menasseh ben Israel, Conciliat, in Deut. Quest. 11. p. 240.

nor have made any great noise in the city, or have been taken notice of by Christ, or moved his compassion towards him; nor merely out of any particular synagogue, nor was the excommunication called *Nidui*, which was a separation for thirty days, and for the space of four cubits only; but was what they call *Oberem*, which was a cutting him off from the whole congregation of Israel; an anathematizing him, and a devoting him to ruin and destruction: and now in part was fulfilled, *Isaiah lxi. 5.* for this was done in presence of zeal, for the honour and glory of God; and Christ appeared to the joy and comfort of this man, and to the shame and confusion of those that cast him out, as the following verses shew.

35 ¶ Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, *Dost thou believe on the Son of God?*

Jesus heard that they had cast him out.] For this being perhaps the first instance of putting in execution the act they had made, *§. 22.* and was a stretching of that act; which only threatened with an ejection, in case any should confess Jesus to be the Messiah; which this man had not done as yet, only had said he was a prophet, and that he was of God; it made a very great noise in the city, and the report of it was soon spread over it; and it became the talk of every one, and so Jesus, as man, came to hear of it; though he as God, knew it the very instant it was done, and needed not any to make report of it to him:

And when he had found him.] Not by chance, or meeting him unawares, but seeking him; and knowing where he was, went to the very place, and found him in this piteous condition, abandoned by all mankind. This is an emblem of Christ's seeking after his chosen ones, both in redemption and in effectual vocation, who are like sheep going astray, and never come to, and lay hold on Christ, till he comes first, seeks after, and apprehends them. He sends his ministers and his Gospel after them, where they are, and his Spirit into their hearts; yea, he comes himself, and enters there, and dwells in them by faith: he knows where they are, as he knew Matthew the publican, Zaccheus, and the woman of Samaria; and even though they are at the ends of the earth; and he goes and looks them up, and finds them; and he finds them in a deplorable condition, in a desert, in a waste howling wilderness, hopeless and helpless, poor and miserable, and blind and naked; in a pit wherein is no water; in the mire and clay of sin; in the paw of Satan, and under the power of darkness.

He said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?] The Perse version adds, "who hath healed thee?" this supposes that there was a Son of God, or a divine person known by the Jews under this character, and that the expected Messiah would appear as such; and that as such, he is the object of faith, and therefore as such, must be God; since a creature, though ever so much dignified, or with whatsoever office invested, is not the object of faith, trust, and confidence, with respect to everlasting life and happiness: and it may be observed, that whenever Christ finds any of his people, he brings them to believe in him, as the Son of God, for righteousness and life: he himself is the author of faith in them, as well as the object of it; and no doubt power went along with these words, creating faith in this man: this was a most proper and pertinent question put to him in this present case; and suggests, that if he believed in the Son of God, it was no matter in what situation he was among men; since he would then appear to be a Son of God himself by adopting grace, and so an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ; would receive the remission of his sins, be openly justified in the court of conscience, as well as of God, and be everlastingly saved. And this question is put by Christ, not as though he was ignorant whether he believed in him or no; for he knew from the beginning who would, and who would not believe in him; he that knew whether Peter loved him or no, knew whether this man believed in him or no; but this he said to draw forth the principle of faith, which was wrought in him, into act and exercise, and to direct it to its proper object. And this effect it had, as appears by what follows.

36 He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

He answered and said.] That is, "he that was healed," as the Syriac version reads:

Who is the Lord, that I might believe in him?] Which shews, that though he knew there was a Messiah expected, and he believed in him as to come, yet he knew not that he was already come, nor the particular person in human nature who was the Messiah, and the Son of God; even though he had been cured of his blindness by him, and had vindicated him, and pleaded for him before the sanhedrim, and had also suffered for him; which makes it appear, that Christ does many and great things for his people before they know him: nor does their interest in him, in his favour, and in the blessings of his grace, depend upon their knowledge of him, and faith in him; as likewise, that a man may plead for Christ, and suffer much for him, and yet be ignorant of him:

however,

however, there were in this man desires of knowing Christ; he was not like those in *Job* xxi. 14. and there was a readiness in him to believe on him, as soon as he was pointed out to him. Not that there is any natural disposition in men to believe, or any readiness in themselves to it, or that it is of themselves; nothing of this nature was in this man; but he having, by the power and grace of Christ, the principle of faith implanted in his heart, what he wanted was to be directed to the proper object of it, as he is in the next verse.

37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.

And Jesus said unto him] Giving him the tokens by which he might know him;

Thou hast both seen him] Not that he had seen him before now, with his bodily eyes; for he was blind when Christ anointed him, and sent him to Siloam to wash; nor when he came back, since Jesus was gone, and he knew not where he was; but he had seen him, that is, he had perceived and felt the power of him in restoring him to sight; and now he had seen him bodily, and did at this present time: but as this was not sufficient to distinguish him from other persons in company, he adds,

And it is he that talketh with thee] In like manner he made himself known to the woman of Samaria, *John* iv. 26.

38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

And he said, Lord, I believe] He immediately found faith in his soul, and that in exercise, moving towards, and acting upon Christ, as the Son of God, and true Messiah, for everlasting life and salvation; and as soon as he did perceive it, he made an open and hearty profession of it:

And he worshipped him] As God, with religious worship and adoration, not only trusting in him, but ascribing honour, glory, and blessing to him, which are due to God only, and not a creature.

39 ¶ And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

And Jesus said, For judgment, &c.] The Syriac version reads, "for the judgment of this world I am come;" and with which agrees the Ethiopic version, "for the judgment of the world, I am come into the world;" and the Arabic and

Persic versions still more expressly, "to judge this world, or the world, am I come:" which seems contrary to what Christ elsewhere says, *John* iii. 12. and chap. xii. 47. Nor is the sense of the words that Christ came by the judgment of God, or the order of divine providence, or to administer justice in the government of the world, in a providential way, or to distinguish his own people from others, though all these are true; but either to fulfil the purpose and decree of God in revealing truth to some, and hiding it from others; or in a way of judgment to inflict judicial blindness on some, whilst in a way of mercy he illuminated others. So Nonnus interprets it of *apla diason*, "a two-fold judgment," which is different the one from the other.

That they which see not might see] Meaning, not so much corporally as spiritually, since in the opposite clause corporal blindness can have no place; for though Christ restored bodily sight to many, he never took it away from any person. The sense is, that Christ came as a light into the world, that those who are in the darkness of sin, ignorance, and unbelief, and who are sensible of the same, and desire spiritual illumination, as this man did, might see what they are by nature, what need they stand in of him, and what fulness of grace, life, righteousness, and salvation there is in him for them.

And that they which see might be made blind] That such who are wise and knowing in their own conceit, who fancy themselves to have great light and knowledge, to have the key of knowledge, and to have the true understanding of divine things, and to be guides of the blind, such as the scribes and Pharisees, might be given up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart, so as to shut their eyes, and harden their hearts against the Gospel, and the truths of it, and which was in judgment to them: such different effects Christ and his Gospel have, as to illuminate and soften some, and blind and harden others; just as some creatures, as bats and owls, are blinded by the sun, whilst others see clearly by the light of it; and as that also has these different effects to soften the wax, and harden the clay; see *Isaiah* vi. 8.

40 And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?

And some of the Pharisees, &c.] Who had followed him, and were watching him, and observing what he said and did, in order to take all advantages, and every opportunity against him, they could,

Heard

Heard these words, and said unto him, *Are we blind also?* They perceived he pointed at them, and therefore with indignation ask this question, taking it as a great affront unto them, to put such wise, learned, and knowing men as they in company with the ignorant and unlearned common people; see *Isaiah* xlii. 19.

41 Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

Jesus said unto them, &c. And sensible of it, and knew yourselves to be blind, and were desirous of light and knowledge,

Ye would have no sin] Or your sin would not be so aggravated; it would not be imputed to you; it would be pardoned and taken away from you: for the sense cannot be, that their blindness would not have been criminal, or they should have had no sin in them, or any done by them; only, that had this been barely their case, there would have been some hope of them, that their sin might be forgiven, and put away, and be no more; see *1 Tim.* i. 13.

But now ye say, We see] They thought themselves to be wise and knowing, and stood in no need of any illumination from him, but were obstinate and hardened in their infidelity, and wilfully opposed and shut their eyes against all the light and evidence of truth:

Therefore your sin remaineth] Untaken away, yea, immovable, or unpardonable; the guilt of it abode upon them; nor was there any hope of its being removed from them; owning that they saw, and yet believed not: sinning wilfully against light and knowledge in rejecting Jesus, as the Messiah, they sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost, which is never forgiven. And so the Ethiopic version renders it, "your error shall not be forgiven you." See *Matt.* xii. 32.

CHAP. X.

In this chapter Christ telleth them he is the true shepherd of his sheep, v. 1—6. and the door, v. 7—11. and that he is no hireling, by his willingness to lay down his life for his sheep, v. 13—21. the Jews ask him whether he is Christ, v. 22—24. which he testifieth by his actions, v. 25. Christ sheweth who are his sheep, and who not: telling them the benefits his sheep shall receive from him, v. 26—30. wherefore the Jews would have stoned him, v. 31—33. but he justifies himself, and escapeth from them, and goeth to Jordan, v. 34—42.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into

the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

Verily, verily, I say unto you] To the scribes and Pharisees, who had taken it ill that they should be thought to be blind; and who had cast out the man that Christ had cured of blindness, for speaking in favour of him; and who had traduced Christ as an impostor and a deceiver, and set up themselves to be the shepherds of the flock, and the guides and rulers of the people; all which occasioned the following parable; the design of which is to shew, that Christ is the true and only shepherd, who was appointed, called, and sent of God, whose the sheep are, whose voice they hear, and know, and whom they follow; and that they, the scribes and Pharisees, were thieves and robbers, and not shepherds of the flock; who were not sent of God, nor did they come in at the right door, but in another way, and usurped a domination which did not belong to them.

He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold] The sheepfold, with the Jews, was called דֶּרֶךְ; and this, as their writers say (a), was an inclosure sometimes in the manner of a building, and made of stone, and sometimes was fenced with reeds; and in it was a large door, at which the shepherd went in and out, when he led in, or brought out the sheep. At tithing, which was done in the sheepfold, they made a little door, so that two lambs could not come out together; and to this inclosure is the allusion here; and by *the sheepfold* is meant the church of God; see *v.* 16. and a good fold it is, *Ezek.* xxxiv. 14. The church may be compared to a sheepfold, because it is separated from the world; it is where the people of God, and sheep of Christ are gathered together; where there is a strict union between them; have society with each other; keep one another warm and comfortable; and where they are fed and nourished, and are preserved; and where they lie down and have rest; and which, like a sheepfold, will be taken down, and not always continue in the form it now is: and by *the door* into it, is meant Christ himself, as appears from *v.* 7, 9. faith in him, a profession of him, and authority from him. Now he that does not come into the church of God, whether as a member of it, or officer in it, at this door,

But climbeth up some other way] By hypocrisy and deceit; or, like the prophets of old, who ran and were not sent; prophesied when they were not spoken to, but took their place and part by usurpation:

The

(a) Maimon, & Bartenora in *Mish. Beracot*, c. 9. §. 7.

The same is a thief and a robber] Steals into the church, or into an office in it, and robs God or Christ of their power and authority; and such were the scribes and Pharisees: the Persian version renders the words, "Whoever does not introduce the sheep through the door of the sheepfold, know that that man is a thief and a robber;" which these men were so far from doing, that they would not suffer those that were entering to go in, Matt. xxiii. 13. The difference between a thief and a robber, with the Jews, was, that the former took away a man's property privately, and the latter openly (b).

2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

But he that entereth in by the door] With a divine commission, and by a divine authority, who comes not of himself, but is sent; does not take the honour to himself, or thrust in himself, and assume an office to himself, but is called unto it, and invested in it, he

Is the shepherd of the sheep] By whom Christ means himself, as is evident from *John*. 11, 14. whose the sheep are, and who takes care of them, and feeds them, as a shepherd does his flock; and which holds true of any under-shepherd, having his mission and commission, and deriving his authority from Christ.

3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

To him the porter openeth] There is nothing in the explanation of this parable given by Christ, that directs to the sense of this clause; the allusion cannot be, as some have thought, to great men, who have porters at their gates, to open them, and let in persons that come and knock; since the parable is concerning the sheepfold, and the shepherd, and the sheep that go into it; and therefore must refer to one that at least, at certain times, stood by the door of the sheepfold, and had the care of it, and opened it upon proper occasions; by whom is designed not Michael the archangel, nor the virgin Mary, nor Peter, the supposed door-keeper of heaven, as say the Papists, nor Moses, as others, who wrote of Christ; nor does it seem so well to understand it of the ministers of the Gospel, who preach Jesus Christ, and open the door of faith, or set open the door of the Gospel, whereby Christ comes into the souls of men, and they come to him; though this is a sense not to be despised; but rather, this intends God the Father, from whom Christ, as man and mediator, derives

his authority, and by whom he is let into, and invested with his office, as the shepherd of the sheep; or else the holy Spirit, who opens the everlasting doors of the hearts of men, of Christ's sheep, and lets him in unto them.

And the sheep hear his voice] Not the porter's; though they do hear the voice of Christ's ministers, and of God the Father, and of the Holy Ghost; but the shepherd's, even the voice of Christ; and which is no other than the gospel, which is a voice of love, grace, and mercy; which proclaims peace, pardon, liberty, life, righteousness, and salvation; and which is a soul-quickenings, alluring, delighting, refreshing, and comforting voice: this the people of Christ are made to hear, not only externally, but internally; so as to understand it, delight in it, and distinguish it from another: and these are called *sheep*, and that before conversion; not because they have the agreeable properties of sheep; nor because predisposed unto, and unprejudiced against the Gospel of Christ: for they are the reverse of these; nor can some things be said of them before, as after conversion, as that they hear the voice of Christ, and follow him; nor merely by anticipation, but by reason of electing grace, and because given to Christ the great shepherd, under this character, to be kept and fed by him. And they are so called after conversion, because they are harmless and inoffensive in their lives and conversations; and yet are exposed to the malice, cruelty, and butchery of men; and are meek and patient under sufferings; and are clean, social, and profitable.

And he calleth his own sheep by name] The Ethiopic version adds, "and loves them." These are Christ's own, by the Father's gift of them to him, by the purchase of his own blood, and by the power of his grace upon them; who looks them up, and finds them out, and brings them home, and takes care of them as his own, and feeds them as a shepherd his flock: these he may be said to call by name, in allusion to the eastern shepherds, who gave names to their sheep, as the Europeans do to their horses and other creatures, and who could fit and call them by their names: this is expressive not only of Christ's call of his people by powerful and special grace, but of the exact and distinct knowledge he has of them, and the notice he takes of them, as well as of the affection he has for them; see *Isaiah* xliii. 1. 2 *Tim.* ii. 19.

And leadeth them out] From the world's goats, among whom they lay, and from the folds of sin, and the barren pastures of mount Sinai, and their own righteousness, on which they were feeding, and out of themselves, and from off all dependence on any thing of their own; and he leads unto himself, and the fulness of his grace, and to his

(b) Maimon. Hilchot Genuba, c. x. §. 3.

blood and righteousness, and into his Father's presence, and communion with him; and in the way of righteousness and truth, and into the green pastures of the word and ordinances, beside the still waters of his sovereign love and grace.

4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

And when he putteth forth his own sheep] The Ethiopic version reads, "when he leads them all out;" in order to bring them into proper pastures:

He goeth before them] In allusion to the eastern shepherds, who when they put out their flocks, did not, as ours do, drive them before them, and follow after them, at least not always, but went before them: to Christ, the great shepherd, goes before his flock, not only to provide for them, but by way of example to them; in many instances he is an example to the flock, as under-shepherds, according to the measure of grace received, should be: he has left them an example in many respects, that they should tread in his steps:

And the sheep follow him] In the exercise of the graces of humility, love, patience, self-denial, and resignation of will to the will of God; and in the discharge of duty, walking, in some measure, as he walked.

For they know his voice] In the Gospel, which directs and encourages them to exercise grace in him, and to walk in the path of duty: this they know by the majesty and authority of it; and by the power with which it comes to their souls; and by its speaking of him, and leading to him; and by the evenness, harmony, and consistency of it. The Persian version renders the whole thus; "When he calls and leads out the sheep, they go before him, and their lambs after them, for they know his voice."

5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

And a stranger will they not follow] One that knows not Christ, is not sent by him, and who does not preach him:

But will flee from him] Shun him and his ministry, as not only disagreeable, but dangerous:

For they know not the voice of strangers] They do not approve of their doctrine, nor take any delight in it, or receive any profit from it. The Persian version, as before, reads, "Neither will the lambs ever go after strange sheep, and if they see them, they will flee from them."

6 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

This parable spake Jesus unto them] To the Pharisees, who were with him, chapter ix. 40.

But they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them] The things spoken by him being delivered in a parabolical way, though in lively figures; and in terms plain and easy to be understood; yet, what through the blindness of their minds, and the hardness of their hearts, and their prejudices in favour of themselves, and against Christ, they did not understand what were meant by them. See Matt. xiii. 13—15.

7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

Then said Jesus unto them again] By way of explanation of the above parable, since they did not understand it:

Verily, verily, I say unto you] This is certainly truth, and what may be depended on as such, whether it will be believed or no:

I am the door of the sheep] And of none but them; not of goats, dogs, or swine; none but sheep enter at this door; and all the sheep do sooner or later: Christ is the door to them, by which they enter into a visible church-state, and are let into a participation of the ordinances of it, as baptism and the Lord's supper: no man comes into a church, at the right door, or in a right way, or has a right to partake of Gospel-ordinances, but he that truly believes in Christ, and makes a profession of faith in him: Christ is the door of the under-shepherds of the sheep; none are fit to be pastors of churches, but who first enter into a Gospel-church at this door, and are qualified, and called, and sent forth by Christ: he is the door of the sheep, by which they are let into the presence of his Father, and have communion with him, and partake of all the blessings of grace; it is through him that sanctifying, justifying, pardoning, and adopting grace, are conveyed unto them, and they brought into the enjoyment of them; it is through him they have all their peace, joy, and comfort, and deliverance from, and victory over all their enemies; through him they have heirship, and a right unto eternal life, and that itself; for he is the door into heaven itself, through which they shall have an abundant entrance into it: and he is the only door into each of these; there is no coming to God the Father but by, and through him; nor to a participation of the blessings of the covenant, nor rightly into a Gospel-church-state, and to the ordinances

of it, nor into heaven at last, but in at this door: and this is a door of faith and hope, and an open one, for all sensible sinners, for all the sheep of Christ, to enter in at; though it is a strait gate, the number being few that enter in at it; and those that do, though they are certainly, yet but scarcely saved; for it is through many tribulations and afflictions that they enter.

8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

This must be understood with some restrictions, not of every individual person, nor of every individual prophet or shepherd; not of Moses, nor of the prophets of the Lord, nor of John the Baptist, who came immediately before Christ, was his harbinger, and prepared his way; but of those prophets who came, and were not sent of God, and so did not come in by the door; of the shepherds of Israel, who fed themselves and not the flock, but lorded it over God's heritage; and of such, as Theudas, and Judas the Galilean, who boasted that they were some great persons, but were only *thieves and robbers*; and particularly of the *three shepherds* cut off in one month, *Zech. xi. 8.* supposed to be the three sects among the Jews, and the leaders of them, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, especially the former; who were wolves in sheeps cloathing, usurped a power that did not belong to them, robbed God of his authority and glory; and, in a literal sense, plundered men of their substance, and devoured widows houses, as well as destroyed their souls. The phrase, *before me*, is wanting in seven of Beza's exemplars, and in several others; and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions:

But the sheep did not hear them] The elect of God, some of which there were in all ages, though their number is comparatively few, did not attend to the false prophets, and false teachers, and idol shepherds; did not receive their doctrines, nor follow their practices; for it is not possible that these should be finally and totally deceived, or carried away with the error of the wicked.

9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

I am the door] Of the sheep, as before; see *v. 7.* The Ethiopic version reads, "I am the true door of the sheep;" which is repeated for further confirmation, and for the sake of introducing what follows:

By me if any man enter in] Into the sheepfold, the church,

He shall be saved] Not that being in a church, and having submitted to ordinances, will save any, but entering into these, at the right door, or through faith in Christ, such will be saved, according to *Mark xvi. 16.* such shall be saved from sin, the dominion of it, the guilt and condemning power of it, and at last from the being of it; and from the law, its curse and condemnation, and from wrath to come, and from every evil, and every enemy; such are, and for ever shall be, in a safe state, being in Christ, and in his hands, out of which none can pluck them:

And shall go in and out] In allusion to the sheep going in and out of the fold: not that those who come in at the right door, shall go out of the church, or from among the saints again; but this phrase rather denotes the exercises of faith in going unto Christ, and acting upon him, and in coming forth in the outward confession of him, and the performance of good works; or in going unto him, and dealing with his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, and coming out of themselves, and all dependence on their own righteousness; or it may regard the conversation of the saints in the church, their attendance on ordinances, their safety there, their free and open communion one with another, and with Christ, in whose name and strength they do all they do, coming in and out at this door:

And find pasture] Green and good pasture; pasture for their souls; the words of faith, and good doctrine; the wholesome words of Christ Jesus; the ordinances, the breasts of consolation; yea, Christ himself, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed: the Persic version renders it, "and shall find a pastor, or shepherd." See *Jer. iii. 15.*

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

The thief cometh not, but for to steal] That is his first and principal view; to steal, is to invade, seize, and carry away another's property. Such teachers that come not in by the right door, or with a divine commission, seek to deceive, and carry away the sheep of Christ from him, though they are not able to do it; and to steal away their hearts from him, as Absalom stole the hearts of the people from their rightful lord and sovereign, David his father; and to subject them to themselves, that they might lord it over them, and make a property of them; as the Pharisees did, who, under a pretence of long prayers, devoured widows houses.

And to kill and to destroy] Either the souls of men by their false doctrines, which eat as doth a canker, and poison the minds of men, and slay the souls that should not die, subverting the faith of nominal professors, though they cannot destroy any of the true sheep of Christ; or the bodies of the saints, by their oppression, tyranny, and persecution, who are killed all the day long for the sake of Christ, and are accounted as sheep for the slaughter, by these men; they thinking that by so doing they do God good service.

I am come that they might have life] That the sheep might have life, or the elect of God might have life, both spiritual and eternal; who, as the rest of mankind, are by nature dead in trespasses and sins, and liable in themselves to an eternal death: Christ came into this world in human nature, to give his flesh, his body, his whole human nature, soul and body, for the life of these persons, or that they might live spiritually here, and eternally hereafter; and so the Arabic version renders it, "that they might have eternal life;" Nonnus calls it, "a life to come;" which is in Christ, and the gift of God through him; and which he gives to all his sheep, and has a power to give to as many as the Father has given him:

And that they might have it more abundantly] Or, as the Syriac version reads, "something more abundant;" that is, than life; meaning not merely than the life of wicked men, whose blessings are curses to them; or than their own life, only in the present state of things; or than long life, promised under the law to the observers of it; but even than the life Adam had in innocence, which was but a natural and moral, not a spiritual life, or that life which is hid with Christ in God; and also than that which angels live in heaven, which is the life of servants, and not of sons: or else the sense is, that Christ came that his people might have eternal life with more abundant evidence of it, than was under the former dispensation, and have stronger faith in it, and a more lively hope of it: or, as the words may be rendered, "and that they might have an abundance;" besides life, might have an abundance of grace from Christ, all spiritual blessings in him now, and all fulness of joy, glory, and happiness hereafter.

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd] A shepherd of his Father's appointing, calling, and sending, to whom the care of all his sheep, or chosen ones, was committed; who was set up as a shepherd over them by him, and was entrusted with them; and who being called, undertook to feed them; and being promised, was sent unto the lost sheep of the house

of Israel; and under the character of a shepherd, died for them, and rose again, and is accountable to his Father for every one of them; the shepherd, the great and chief shepherd; the famous one, so often spoken and prophesied of, Gen. xlix 24. *Isaiah* xl. 11. *Ezek.* xxxiv. 23. And discharging his office aright, he is the good shepherd; as appears in his providing good pasture, and a good fold for his sheep; in protecting them from their enemies; in healing all their diseases; in restoring their souls when strayed from him; in watching over them in the night seasons, lest any hurt them; in searching for them, when they have been driven, or scattered in the dark and cloudy day; in caring for them, so that he lose none of them; and in nothing more than in what follows,

The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep] Not only exposes it to danger, as David did his for the sake of his father's flock, but gives it away freely and voluntarily, for the sake of the sheep; in their room and stead, as a ransom for them, that they may be delivered from death, and might have eternal life. The Ethiopic version renders it, "the good shepherd gives his life for the redemption of his sheep;" so Nonnus paraphrases it, the "ransom price of his own sheep." This belongs to Christ's priestly office, and with the Jews, priests were sometimes shepherds: hence we read (c) of, רועים כהנים "shepherds that were priests." Philo the Jew, speaks (d) of God as a shepherd and king; and of his setting his Word, his first-born Son, over the holy flock, to take care of it: and a good shepherd is thus described by the (e) Jews; "As רועי טוב a good shepherd" delivers the flock from the wolf, and "from the lions (see γ. 12.) So he that leads Israel, if he is good, delivers them from the idolatrous nations, and from judgment below and above, and leads them to the life of the world to come, or eternal life." (See γ. 10.) Which description agrees with Christ, the good shepherd; and so the Lord is said to be רועי טוב "the good shepherd," and merciful, and there is none like him (f).

12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd] That is, who is not the owner of the sheep, though

(c) *Mishn. Betsorot*, c. 5. §. 4. & *de nom. mutat.* p. 1062.

(d) *De Agricultura*, p. 195.

(e) *Zohar in Exod.* fol. 9. 3.

(f) *Aben Ezra in Psal.* xxiii. 3. & *Kimchi in Psal.* xxiii. 2.

though he keeps them, yet only for reward; by whom are meant, not the faithful ministers of the word, who live upon the Gospel, as Christ has ordained, and who are worthy of their reward, and are not to be called hirelings by way of reproach; since they teach not for hire and reward, but for the good of souls, and the interest of the Redeemer; but such who seek only their gain from their quarter, and mind their own things, and not the things of Jesus Christ;

Who own the sheep are not] Who have neither a propriety in them, nor an hearty affection for them, and so care not what becomes of them: such an one

Seeth the wolf coming] By whom may be meant, either Satan; for the Jews compare Israel to a flock of sheep, and Satan, they say, *is the wolf* (g); or any false prophet, or teacher, who are ravenous wolves, though sometimes in sheeps cloathing; or any tyrant, oppressor, or persecutor of the saints:

And leaveth the sheep] As the idol shepherd, against whom a woe is pronounced *Zech. xi. 17.*

And fleeth] not being willing to bear any reproach or persecution for the sake of Christ; not such a keeper of the flock as David, who went after the lion and the bear, and when they arose up against him, did not flee, but caught them by the beard and slew them; nor like the apostle Paul, who fought with beasts at Ephesus, and would turn his back on none, nor give place, no, not for an hour, that truth might continue:

And the wolf catcheth them] Some of them:

And scattereth the sheep] The rest; so are the sheep of Christ and his churches sometimes scattered, by persecution raised against them; see *Acts viii. 1, 4.* The Jews have a rule concerning such an hireling shepherd (h), which is this; "A shepherd that feeds his flock, and leaves it, and goes to the city, and a wolf comes and ravines, and the lion comes and tears in pieces, he is free; but if he leaves by it his staff and his scrip, he is guilty." Which Maimonides thus (i) expresses and explains; "A shepherd who can deliver that which is torn, and that which is carried captive, with other shepherds, and with staves, and does not call the other shepherds, nor bring the staves to deliver them, he is guilty: one that keeps freely, and one that keeps for hire; he that keeps freely, calls the shepherds, and brings the staves freely; and if he does not find them, he is not guilty; but he that keeps for hire, is obliged to hire shepherds and staves, in order to deliver them."

13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling] And has no propriety in the sheep; had he, he would abide by them, and defend them; but because he has not, he will not expose himself to any danger, but leaves them:

And careth not for the sheep] What becomes of them, providing only for his own safety. Ababinel (k) has a note on *Isaiah xl. 11.* which may serve to illustrate this passage: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; not as he that feeds the flock of others, for the hire they give him, but as a shepherd that feeds his own flock; who has compassion more abundantly on it, because it is his own flock; and therefore he saith, behold, his reward is with him, for he does not seek a reward from another; and his work is before him; for he feeds what is his own, and therefore his eyes and his heart are there." Which is not the case of the hireling; he does not care for them, he has not their good at heart; but the good shepherd has, such an one as Christ is.

14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

I am the good shepherd] See the note on *v. 11.*

And know my sheep] So as to call them all by their names; Christ has an universal, special, distinct, and exact knowledge of all his sheep, as they are the choice of his Father, as his Father's gift to him, and as his own purchase; he bears an affectionate love to them, and takes special care of them; indulges them with intimate communion with himself; and owns and acknowledges them as his, both here and hereafter:

And I am known of mine] Not in a general way, as devils and external professors may know him, but with a special, spiritual, and saving knowledge; Christ's own approve of him as their shepherd and their saviour, and desire no other; they love him above all, in the sincerity of their souls, and with a love as strong as death; they trust in him as their shepherd, believing they shall not want; and appropriate him to themselves, as their own; and care for him, his cause and interest, his Gospel, ordinances, and ministers; and are not ashamed to own him as theirs, in the most public manner.

15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

(g) Caphtor, fol. 58. 1. (h) T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 47. 1. & 93. 2. & 106. 1.

(i) Hillehot Shechinut, c. 3. §. 6.

(k) Maslamai Jeshua, fol. 20. 4.

As the Father knoweth me] These words, with what follow, are in connection with the preceding verse; and the sense is, that the mutual knowledge of Christ and his sheep is like that which his Father and he have of each other. The Father knows Christ as his own Son, and loves him as such, in the most strong and affectionate manner; and has entrusted him with the persons, grace, and glory, of all his people:

Even so know I the Father] Or rather, "and I know the Father;" as he needs must, since he lay in his bosom, and still does, and knows his nature, perfections, purposes, and his whole mind and will; and loves him most ardently, which he has shown by his coming down from heaven to do his will; and trusts in him for the accomplishment of every thing he promised unto him:

And I lay down my life for the sheep] Which proves him to be the good shepherd, *ψ. 11*. The Vulgate Latin version reads, "for my sheep;" which were his by the Father's gift, and for no other has he laid down his life. The Ethiopic version, as before, renders it, or rather explains it, "I lay down my life for the redemption of my sheep."

16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

And other sheep I have] Not distinct from those for whom he laid down his life, but from those who were under the Old-Testament-dispensation, and who heard not the thieves and robbers that were before Christ, *ψ. 8*. others, besides the lost sheep of the house of Israel, or the elect among the Jews, to whom Christ was sent; and by whom are meant the chosen of God among the Gentiles, who were sheep, though not called and folded, for the reasons given in the note on *ψ. 3*. These, though uncalled, belonged to Christ; he had an interest in them, they were given him by his Father; he had them in his hands, and upon his heart; his eye was upon them, and they were under his notice, inspection, and care:

Which are not of this fold] Of the Jewish nation and church, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, were as sheep going astray, and were scattered about in the several parts of the world; and were to be redeemed out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation:

Them also I must bring] Out of the wilderness of the world, from among the men of it, their former sinful companions, from the folds of sin and Satan, and the pastures of their own righte-

ousness; to himself, and into his Father's presence, to his house and ordinances, to a good fold and green pastures; and at last to his heavenly kingdom and glory: and there was a necessity of doing all this, partly on account of his Father's will and pleasure, his purposes and decrees, who had resolved upon it; and partly on account of his own engagements, who had obliged himself to do it; as well as because of the case and condition of these sheep, who otherwise must have eternally perished:

And they shall hear my voice] In the gospel, not only externally, but internally; which is owing to his powerful and efficacious grace, who quickens them, and causes them to hear and live; unstops their deaf ears, and gives them ears to hear; and opens their hearts to attend to his word, and gives them an understanding of it. The Arabic version reads this in connection with the preceding clause, thus, "and I must bring them also to hear my voice;" as well as the rest of the sheep among the Jews, and therefore the Gospel was sent among them:

And there shall be one fold, and one shepherd] One church-state, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles; the middle wall of partition being broken down, these two coalesce in one, become one new man, and members of one and the same body; for though there may be several visible Gospel-churches, yet there is but one kind of church-state, and one general assembly and church of the first-born, one family to which they all belong; for what reasons a church is comparable to a fold, see the note on *ψ. 1*. And over this fold, or flock, there is but one shepherd, Jesus Christ; who is the rightful proprietor, and whose own the sheep are; and who knows how to feed them, and does take care of them; though there are many under-shepherds, whom he employs in feeding them: in the original text the copulative *and* is wanting, and the words stand thus, *one fold, one shepherd*; which not only expresses a peculiar elegance, but answers the proverb delivered in the same form; and to which agree the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, which render them, *and there*, or "they shall be one fold of one shepherd;" or one flock which belongs to one shepherd only; see *Ezek. xxxiv 23*, and chap. xxxvii. 24.

17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

Therefore doth my Father love me] Christ was the object of his Father's love from all eternity, and was loved by him on various accounts; first and

and chiefly, as his own Son, of the same nature with him, and equal to him; and also as Mediator, engaging for, and on the behalf of his chosen people; and likewise as he was clothed with their nature, and even in his state of humiliation; and not only as subject to his ordinances, and obedient to his will, and doing what was pleasing in his sight, but likewise as suffering in their room and stead, and he loved him on this account; the bruising of him was a pleasure to him, not for the sake of that itself, but because thereby his counsels and decrees were accomplished, his covenant fulfilled, and the salvation of his people obtained: hence it follows here,

Because I lay down my life] That is, for the sheep; to ransom them from sin and Satan, the law, its curse and condemnation, and from death and hell, wrath, ruin, and destruction: and the laying down his life on this account, was not only well pleasing to his Father, but likewise was done with the following view; or at least this was the event of it,

That I might take it again] As he did; by raising himself from the dead; by which he was declared to be the Son of God; and to have made full satisfaction to divine justice for the sins of his people; and therefore rose again for their justification; and to be the victorious conqueror over death, having now abolished it, and having in his hands the keys of it, the power over that and the grave: and which life he took up again, by his divine power, and as the surety of his people, to use it for their good; by ascending to his God and theirs, entering into heaven as their forerunner, appearing in the presence of God for them, as their advocate, and ever living to make intercession for them.

18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

No man taketh it from me] It was indeed taken away at the instigation of the Jews, and by the order of Pilate, and by means of the Roman soldiers, who crucified him; and the former of these are often charged with slaying him, and killing him, the Prince of life; and it is expressly said, *His life is taken from the earth*, Acts viii. 33. and yet no man could, nor did take it away, without his Father's will, and determinate counsel and knowledge, by which he was delivered up into the hands of the above persons, and by which they did to him what they did, or otherwise they could have had no power over him; nor could any man, nor did any man, take away his life from him, without his own consent; he volun-

tarily surrendered himself; or he could never have been taken; he went freely to the cross, or he could never have been led there; he suffered himself to be nailed to the accursed tree, and when he hung on it, he could easily have disengaged himself, and come down; and when they had him there, they could not have taken away his life, had he not of himself given up the Ghost, and breathed out his life and soul.

I lay it down of myself] Of my own will, or of my own accord, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persian versions render it; which was done with the greatest patience and meekness, resolution, courage, and magnanimity; and with a full will, and with the greatest cheerfulness and alacrity; and that as a ransom for his people, and that they might live through him:

I have power to lay it down] This was not his life as God, but as man; and was so his own, as it was not his Father's, and was entirely at his own dispose; for it was the life of that individual human nature, which was united to his divine person; and so in a sense his, as it was not either the Father's or the Spirit's; and was so his own, as ours are not, which are from God, and dependent on him, and entirely to be disposed of by him, and not by ourselves: but Christ, the Prince of life, had a power of laying down his life of his own accord, as a ransom-price for his sheep:

And I have power to take it again] As he was the Son of God, and truly God, and as the surety of his people; having satisfied law and justice by his obedience, sufferings, and death, and for the ends mentioned in the note on the preceding verse:

This commandment have I received of my Father] Which may respect both branches of his power, but is not the foundation of it, but the reason of his exercising it; because it was so agreeable to his Father's will, which is the same with his own, as he is the Son of God, and one with his Father, and equal to him; and what he delights in as Mediator, in which capacity he is considered as a servant; and in which he cheerfully became obedient, even unto death, to his Father's command, or in compliance with his will: the Syriac, Arabic, and Persian versions read, "because this commandment have I received of my Father;" this is a reason why he so readily exerted his power, both in laying down his life, and taking it again, because it was his Father's command and will, and which he received from him with the utmost pleasure; his and his Father's love, good-will, gracious ends and views towards the elect, herein being the same.

19 ¶ There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.

There

There was a division, &c.] As there had been before; see chapter vii. 12. and ix. 16.

For these sayings.] Concerning his being the good shepherd, and laying down his life for the sheep, and having both a power to lay it down, and take it up again.

20 And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?

It was a notion of the Jews, that madness or distraction was from the devil, and therefore these two are here joined together, having a devil, and being mad: there is a spirit which they call *Tazazith*, and which they say (1); "is an evil spirit" that takes away the understanding of men; and under the influence of such a demon, the Jews thought Christ to be: and therefore say,

Why hear ye him?] He is a lunatic; he is distracted, he is a madman; how can you bear to hear such ranting blasphemous stuff, which no man in his senses would ever utter? Nor is any thing he says to be regarded, since he is not in his right mind; but is under the power and influence of some evil spirit, which infills these wild and frantic notions into him, and puts him upon venting them; but surely no sober man will ever give heed to them.

21 Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

Others said, these are not the words; &c.] No madman or demoniac, one possessed of a devil, and under the influence of Satan, would ever talk in so divine a manner, and speak such words of truth and soberness: these were some of the wiser sort, and were well disposed to Christ, who reasoned thus, and they were but few; whereas those that charged him with madness and distraction, were many, as in the preceding verse;

Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?] Referring to the late instance of Christ's curing a man that was blind from his birth; if it was in the power of a devil to do such an action, which it is not, yet it is not in his nature, it is not usual with him to do any good; but to do all the hurt he can, both to the bodies and souls of men: in one of Beza's copies it is read, "Can one that has a devil, open the eyes of the blind?" So the Persian version, "Can a demoniac, &c.?" which reading suits best with what is before said; and then the sense is, Can a madman, one that is a lunatic, one possessed with the devil, either talk in the manner this man does, or do such wonderful ac-

tions as he has done, particularly cure a man that was born blind.

22 And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.

And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication.]

That is, of the temple, not as built by Solomon, as Nonnus in his paraphrase suggests; or as rebuilt by Zorobabel; for there were no annual feasts appointed in commemoration of either of these; and besides, they were neither of them in the winter-time; the dedication of Solomon's temple was in autumn, at the feast of tabernacles, about our September, 1 Kings viii. 2, 65, 66; and the dedication of the house in Zorobabel's time was in the spring, about our February, Ezra vi. 15, 16. but this was the feast of dedication appointed by Judas

Macchabeus and his brethren, on account of the purging the temple, and renewing the altar, after the profanation of them by Antiochus; which feast lasted eight days, and began on the twenty-fifth of the month *Cisleu*, which answers to part of our December; see 1 Macc. x. 52, 56, 59, and 2 Macc. x. 51, 81, and with which the Jewish writers agree

(m): The account Maimonides gives (n) of it is this: "When the Israelites prevailed over their

"enemies and destroyed them, it was on the

"twenty-fifth of the month *Cisleu*; and they

"went into the temple, and could not find any

"pure oil in the sanctuary, but one rial; and it

"was not enough to light but one day only, and

"they lighted lamps of it for eight days, until

"the olives were squeezed, and they brought

"forth pure oil. Wherefore the wise men of

"that generation ordered, that those eight days

"beginning at the twenty-fifth of *Cisleu*, should

"be days of rejoicing and praise; and they lighted

"lamps at the doors of their houses, every night

"of these eight nights, to shew and make known

"the miracle; and these days are called, in our

"the dedication;" and they are forbidden mourning

"and fasting, as in the days of Purim; and

"the lighting of the lamps on them, is a commandment from the scribes, as is the reading of

"the book of Esther.—How many lamps do they

"light at the feast of dedication? The order is,

"that every house should light one lamp, whether

"the men of the house be many, or whether

"there is but one man in it; but he that honours

"the command, lights up lamps according to the

"number of the men of the house, a lamp for

"every one, whether men or women; and he

"that honours it more, lights up a lamp for every

"man."

(m) *Gana Tzernuch David*, par. 1. fol. 22. 1. *Tzeror Hammor*, fol. 137. 2. (n) *Hilehot Megilla Uchapucha*, c. 3. §. 2. 3. & 4. 1. 2. Vid. *T. Bab. Sabbat*, fol. 22. 2.

(1) R. David Kimchi, *Sopher Shorash rad.* 117.

"man the first night, and adds, as he goes, every night a lamp: for instance, if there be ten men in the house, the first night he lights up ten lamps, and on the second night twenty, and on the third night thirty; until he comes to the eighth night, when he lights up fourscore lamps." Wherefore, as Josephus says (o), this feast was called *φωτα*, *lights*; though he seems to assign another reason of its name, because that prosperity and happiness appeared to them beyond hope, and unexpected: and though this was only an order of Judas and his brethren, and the congregation of Israel, yet the Jews observe it as religiously as if it was the appointment of God himself, and they do not spare to call it so; for in the service of this feast, they have these words (p); "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, who hath sanctified us by his commandments, and hath commanded us to light the lamp of the dedication, &c." And though this feast is said to be at Jerusalem, yet it was not confined there, as were the other feasts, of the passover, pentecost, and tabernacles, for this might be kept in any part of the land: mention is made of the feast of dedication at Lydda (q), and in other countries; Maimonides (r) says, "It is a common custom in all our cities in Spain, that all the men of the house light up a lamp the first night, and add as they go along, a lamp every night, till he lights up on the eighth night eight lamps, whether the men of the house be many, or there be but one man." Some have been of opinion, that this feast of dedication was on the account of the victory Judith gained over Holophernes, by cutting off his head; or however, that the commemoration of that victory, was a part of this festival: in the Vulgate Latin edition of Judith xvi. 31. it is said, "The day of the festivity of this victory is received by the Hebrews, into the number of holy days; and is kept by the Jews from that time, to the present day." And Sigonius (s) asserts, that it is celebrated by the Jews on the 25th day of the month *Cisleu*; which is the same day the feast began, that was instituted by Judas Maccabæus, on the above account: and certain it is, that the Jews do make mention of that fact of hers, in the service for the first sabbath of this feast (t); and some of their writers would have this fact to be in the times of the Maccabees, though as one of their chronologers (u) observes, it appears from the history of Judith, to have been in the times of Nebuchadnezzar; and there are some that say it

was in the times of Cambyfes, son of Cyrus, king of Persia; and was two or three hundred years before the miracle of the dedication: but he observes, that the wise men of that age agreed to comprehend the memorial of that wonderful event, with the miracle of the dedication: and so R. Leo Modena (x) says, "They have a tradition, that in ordaining this feast to be kept, they had an eye also upon that famous exploit performed by Judith upon Holophernes; although many are of opinion, that this happened not at this time of the year; and that they make a commemoration of that piece of gallantry of hers now, because she was of the stock of the Maccabees." But that cannot be, since she must be some hundreds of years before them; wherefore others make mention of another Judith, a daughter of one of the Maccabees, who performed a like exploit upon Nicanor, a general of Demetrius's army: to which R. Gedaliah has respect, when he says (y), "The wise men agreed to comprehend together in the joy of the feast of dedication, the affair of Judith, seeing there was another Judith, from her that killed Holophernes, a daughter of the Maccabees." But it is not clear that there was any such woman, nor that Nicanor was slain by one; and besides, he was killed on the thirteenth of Adar, and that day was ordained to be kept yearly on that account, 1 *Macc.* vii. 43, 49. 2 *Macc.* xv. 36. and the month of Adar answers to part of February.

And it was winter] For the month *Cisleu* answers to our November and December; so that the twenty-fifth of that month might be about the tenth of December, and the Jews reckon part of that month winter, and it must be the part in which this feast was; they say (z), "Half *Cisleu*, *Tebet*, and half *Sheber*, are, *חור* winter:" so that the Evangelist might with propriety say, according to the sense of the Jewish nation, that it was winter; though it was but just entered, even not more than ten days: the reason why this is observed, may be for what follows.

23 And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.

To keep himself warm, and to secure him the better from the inclemency of the weather:

In Solomon's porch] Which was covered over, and the outside of it was inclosed with a wall, which made it very convenient for such a purpose: this was on the outside of the temple eastward, and was a very magnificent structure: the account

Josephus (x) History of the rites, &c. of the Jews, c. 9. (y) Shal. shelet Hakabala, fol. 17. 2. (z) Bereshit Rabba, §. 34. fol. 30. 2. T. Bab. Bava Metsia, fol. 106. 2.

(o) Antiqu. l. 12. c. 7. §. 7. (p) Seder Tephillot, fol. 234. 1. 2.

Ed. Amsterd. (q) T. Bab. Rosh Hashana, fol. 28. 2.

(r) Hilchot Chenuca, c. 4. §. 3. (s) De Repub. Heb.

l. 3. c. 17. (t) Seder Tephillot, fol. 133. 2.

(u) Ganz Tzemach David, par 2, fol. 22. 7.

Josephus (a) gives of it is this; "There was a porch without the temple, overlooking a deep valley, supported by walls of four hundred cubits, made of four-square stone, very white; the length of each stone was twenty cubits, and the breadth six; the work of king Solomon, who first founded the whole temple." Now, though this was not the porch that was built by Solomon, yet as it was built on the same spot, and in imitation of it, it bore his name; mention is made of it in *Acts* iii. 11. and chap. v. 12.

24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

Then came the Jews round about him] Who might be walking there on the same account, and seeing Jesus, took this opportunity, and got about him in great numbers, and hemmed him in; having a design upon him to ensnare him, if possible:

And said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? Or, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persian, and Ethiopic versions literally render it, "How long dost thou take away our soul?" that is, deprive us of the knowledge of thee; Nonnus renders it, "Wherefore dost thou steal away our minds with words?" So Jacob when he went away privately, without the knowledge of Laban, is said to steal away the heart of Laban, as it is in the Hebrew text, in *Gen.* xxxi. 20, 26 (b). In like manner the Jews charge Christ with taking away their soul, or stealing away their heart, or hiding himself from them; not telling them plainly, who he was: therefore say they,

If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly] Freely, boldly, openly, in express words; this they said, not as desirous of knowing who he was, or for the sake of information, but in order to ensnare him; that should he say he was not the Christ, as they might hope he would, for fear of them, now they had got him by himself, and hemmed him in, it would then lessen his credit among the people; and should he say he was the Messiah, they would have whereof to accuse him to the Roman governor, as an enemy to Cæsar, and as one that set himself up for king of the Jews.

25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

Jesus answered them, &c.] He had often said what amounted to it, in his ministry and doctrine; as that God was his Father; and he was the Light of the world, and the good Shepherd, and the

like; but they gave no heed nor credit to his words, even though he told them, that unless they believed he was such a person, they should die in their sins:

The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me] Such as healing the sick, dispossessing devils, cleansing lepers, giving sight to the blind, causing the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and the lame to walk, and raising the dead to life; suggesting, that besides his words, his doctrine and ministry, they had his miracles before them, which plainly shewed who he was; so that they need not have been in any doubt of mind, or suspense about him; nor had they any reason to complain of his hiding himself from them, or depriving them of the knowledge of him.

26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

But ye believe not] In me, as the Messiah,

Because ye are not of my sheep] They were not among the sheep given him by his Father, were they, they would have come to him; that is, have believed in him, according to *John* vi. 37. they were not the chosen of God, predestinated unto eternal life; for as many as are ordained of God to eternal happiness, do believe in God's own time, *Acts* xiii. 48. but these not being the elect of God, had not the faith of God's elect. Christ, as the omniscient God, knew this, that they were not the chosen of God; for he was present when the names of God's elect were written in the book of life; had they been his sheep, he must have known them; for he knows all the sheep, and calls them by name; had they been given him by the Father, he must have known it, and would have owned them as such; but so it was not, and therefore they were left to hardness and unbelief:

As I said unto you] Which seems to refer to what follows, since he had said before, that the sheep hear the voice of the shepherd, and follow him, and that he knows them, *John* x. 4, 14. This clause is omitted in the Vulgate Latin version, and in Nonnus, but is in the Greek copies, and Oriental versions.

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

My sheep hear my voice] The voice of Christ in his Gospel, both externally and internally; see the notes on *John* x. 4, 16. and since therefore these Jews did not, it was a plain case they were not of his sheep.

And I know them] See the note on *John* x. 14. but Christ knew not these as the elect of God, or as

(a) Antiqu. l. 20 c. 8. §. 7. (b) See De Dieu in loc.

the Father's gift to him, and therefore they could not be his sheep :

And they follow me] Both in the exercise of grace, and in the discharge of duty, and whithersoever he the good shepherd leads them ; see the notes on *ψ. 3, 4.* But now, whereas these Jews did not follow Christ, but turned their backs on him, and rejected him, it was notorious that they were none of his sheep ; but both happy and safe are those persons that are the sheep of Christ, as appears from what is next said of them.

28 And I give unto them eternal life ; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my Father's hand.

And I give unto them eternal life] Christ gives eternal life to his sheep, or people now ; he gives them a spiritual life, or a life of grace, which issues in eternal life ; he gives them himself, who is the true God and eternal life, and whoever has him, has life ; he gives them the knowledge of himself, which is life eternal ; and he gives them his righteousness, which is their justification of life, or what entitles them to eternal life ; and he gives them the foretastes of it, in faith and hope, in the enjoyment of himself, and the discoveries of his love ; he gives them the earnest and pledge of it, his own Spirit ; and they have this life in him as their representative, and it is hid with him in God, and is safe and secure for them ; and he will actually give it to them in their own persons, to be for ever enjoyed by them ; and because of the certainty of it, he is said to do it now : this is a pure gift, it is of grace, and not of works ; and it is in the gift of Christ as mediator, who has power to give it to as many as the Father has given him :

And they shall never perish] Though they were lost in Adam, and in a perishing condition in themselves, during their state of unregeneracy ; in which condition they see themselves to be, when convinced by the Spirit of God ; and come to Christ as persons ready to perish, as a Saviour, resolving, that if they perish, they will perish at his feet : and though after conversion they are subject to many falls and spiritual declensions, and lose their peace, joy, and comfort, and imagine their strength and hope are perished, or at least fear they shall one day perish through one sin, or snare, or temptation or another, yet they shall never perish in such sense as the wicked will ; they will not be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power :

Neither shall any pluck them out of my hand] Christ's sheep are in his hand, being put there

by God the Father, both as an instance of his love to Christ and them ; and this was done from all eternity, even when they were chosen in him ; so that they were in the hand of Christ before they were in the loins of Adam ; and were preserved in him, notwithstanding Adam's fall, and through the ruins of it. To be in the hand of Christ, is to be high in his esteem and favour ; the saints are a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of their God ; they are a signet on his right hand that shall never be plucked off ; they are engraven on the palms of his hands : to be in the hand of Christ, is to be in his possession, and at his dispose, as all the elect of God are ; and to be under his guidance, care, and protection, as they be ; they are fed according to the integrity of his heart, and guided by the skilfulness of his hands ; they are always under his care and watchful eye, who protects them from all their enemies, and hides them in the hollow of his hand : hence, because they are so, they are called the *sheep of his hand*, *Psal. xcv. 7.* And none shall ever pluck them from thence ; no man can do it, nor any false teacher can remove them from Christ, by all the art and cunning he is master of ; nor any violent persecutor, by all the force and power he can use ; nor can any sin, or snare, or temptation, draw them out of Christ's hand ; nor any adversity whatever separate them from him : they must be safe, and always abide there, who are in the hand of Christ ; for his hands have laid the foundations of the heavens and the earth, they grasp the whole universe, and hold all things together ; and who then can pluck any out of these hands ? Moreover, Christ as mediator, has all power in heaven and earth ; and even as man, he is the man of God's right hand, made strong for himself.

29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all ; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

My Father which gave them me] So the sheep came to be Christ's, and to be in his hand ; the Father gave them to him, put them into his hand, and made them his care and charge :

Is greater than all] Than all gods, than all beings, than all creatures, angels and men, and than all the enemies of his people ; this must be allowed : the Vulgate Latin version, and so some of the ancients read, " what my Father gave to me, is greater than all ; " meaning, that the church given to him, and built on him, is stronger than all its enemies :

And none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand] So that these sheep have a double security ; they

they are in the hand of Christ, and they are in the hand of the Father of Christ; wherefore could it be thought, which ought not to be, that they could be plucked out of Christ's hand, yet it can never be imagined, that any can pluck them out of the hand of God the Father; and there is no more reason to think that they can be plucked out of the hand of the one, than there is that they can be plucked out of the hand of the other, as is clear from what follows in the next verse; see *Wisdom iii. 1.*

X 30 I and my Father are one.

Not in person, for the Father must be a distinct person from the Son, and the Son a distinct person from the Father; and which is further manifest, from the use of the verb plural, *I and my Father, we are one*; that is, in nature and essence, and perfections, particularly in power; since Christ is speaking of the impossibility of plucking any of the sheep out of his own and his Father's hands; giving this as a reason for it, their unity of nature, and equality of power; so that it must be as impracticable to pluck them out of his hand, as out of his Father's, because he is equal with God the Father, and the one God with him. The Jew (c) objects, "That if the sense of this expression is, that the Father and the Son are one, as the Nazarenes understand and believe it, it will be found that Jesus himself destroys this saying, as it is written in *Mark xiii. 32.* for saith Jesus, *That day and that hour, there is none knoweth, not the angels, nor the Son, but the Father only*; lo, these words shew, that the Father and the Son are not one, since the Son does not know what the Father knows." But it should be observed, that Christ is both the Son of God, and the Son of man, as the christians believe; as he is the Son of God, he lay in the bosom of his Father, and was privy to all his secrets, to all his thoughts, purposes, and designs; and as such, he knew the day and hour of judgment, being God omniscient; and in this respect is one with the Father, having the same perfections of power, knowledge, &c. but then as the Son of man, he is not of the same nature, and has not the same knowledge; his knowledge of things was derived, communicated, and not infinite; and did not reach to all things at once, but was capable of being increased, as it was: and it is with regard to him as the son of man, that Jesus speaks of himself in *Mark*; whereas he is here treating of his divine sonship, and almighty power; wherefore considered in the relation of the Son of God, and as possessed of the same perfections with God, he and his Father are

one; though as man, he is different from him, and knew not some things he did: so that there is no contradiction between the words of Christ in one place, and in the other; nor is he chargeable with any blasphemy against God, or any arrogance in himself, by assuming Deity to himself; nor deserving of punishment, even to be deprived of human life, as the Jew suggests; nor is what he produces from a Socinian writer of any moment, that these words do not necessarily suppose, that the Father and the Son are of the same essence; since it may be said of two men, that they are one, and yet are not the same man, but one is one man, and the other another; for we do not say they are one and the same person, which does not follow from their being of one and the same nature, but that they are one God, and two distinct persons.

31 ¶ Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

As they had done before, chapter viii. 59. see the note there.

32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

Jesus answered them, Many good works] Such as healing the sick, and all manner of diseases; dispossessing devils, cleansing lepers, giving sight to the blind, causing the dumb to speak, the deaf to hear, and the lame to walk; which were not only works of power, but of mercy and beneficence; and therefore are called good works, as well they were great and miraculous ones:

Have I shewed you from my Father] Which Christ did in the name, and by the command and authority of the Father; who gave him them to do, and did them by him; and which were evident and notorious, and were done so openly and publicly, that they could not be denied:

For which of these works do ye stone me?] Suggesting, that his public life had been a continued series of such kind actions to the sons of men, and it could be for nothing else, surely, that they took up stones to stone him; wherefore the part they acted, was a most ungrateful, cruel, and barbarous one.

33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not] They could not deny that he had done many good works; this was too barefaced

to

to be contradicted; yet they cared not to own them; and though they industriously concealed their resentment at them, yet they were very much grieved and made uneasy by them, but chose to give another reason for their stoning him:

But for blasphemy] Which required death by stoning, according to *Lev. xxiv. 16.* and according to the Jews oral law (d):

And because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God] Which they concluded very rightly, from his saying, *ψ. 30.* that God was his Father, and that he and his Father were one; that is, in nature and essence, and therefore he must be God; but then this was no blasphemy, but a real truth, as is hereafter made to appear; nor is there any contradiction between his being man, and being God; he is truly and really man, but then he is not a mere man, as the Jews suggested; but is truly God; as well as man, and is both God and man in one person, the divine and human nature being united in him, of which they were ignorant: two mistakes they seem to be guilty of in this account; one, that Christ was a mere man, the other, that he made himself God, or assumed Deity to himself, which did not belong to him, and therefore must be guilty of blasphemy; neither of which were true: the phrase is used by the Jews of others who have taken upon them the name and title of God; as of Hiram king of Tyre, of whom they say, *שעשו עצמם אלוה* "that he made himself God (e)"; the same they say of Nebuchadnezzar; and the modern Jews still continue the same charge against Jesus, as their ancestors did, and express it in the same language, and say of him, that he was a man, and set himself up for God (f).

34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?

Jesus answered them, &c.] In the law which was given unto them, of which they boasted, and pretended to understand and interpret, even in *Psalms lxxxii. 6.* for the law includes not only the Pentateuch, but all the books of the Old Testament: it is an observation of one of the Jewish doctors (g), that, "With the wise men of blessed memory, it is found in many places that the word *law*, comprehends the prophets and the *hagiographa*." Among which last stands the book of *Psalms*; and this may be confirmed by a passage out of the Talmud (h); it is asked,

"From whence does the resurrection of the dead appear, *מן חזרו* "out of the law?" It is answered, "As it is said in *Psalms lxxxiv. 4.* *Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they will still praise thee, Selah; they do praise thee*, it is not said, *but they will praise thee*; from hence is a proof of the resurrection of the dead, "out of the law." The same question is again put, and then *Isaiah lii. 8.* is cited, and the like observation made upon it. Moreover, this is a way of speaking used by the Jews, when they introduce another citing a passage of scripture thus (i), *בדורכא הלל נחב* "is it not written in your law," *Deut. iv. 9.* *only take heed to thyself, &c.* so here the scripture follows,

I said, ye are Gods?] Which is spoken to civil magistrates, so called, because of their authority and power; and because they do, in some sort, represent the divine majesty, in the government of nations and kingdoms. Many of the Jewish writers by *gods*, understand *the angels*. The Targum paraphrases the words thus, "I said ye are accounted as angels, as the angels on high, all of you;" and to this sense some of their commentators interpret it. Jarchi's gloss is, "Ye are gods;" that is, *angels*; for when I gave the law to you, it was on this account, that the angel of death might not any more rule over you." The note of Aben Ezra is, *and the children of the most high*; as angels; and the sense is, your soul is as the soul of angels: hence the (k) Jew charges Christ with seeking refuge in words that will not profit, or be any help to him; when he cites these words, shewing that magistrates are called gods; when the sense is only, that they are like to the angels in respect of their souls. But let it be observed, that it is not said, *Ye are as gods*, as in *Genesis iii. 5.* but *ye are gods*; not like unto them only, but *are* in some sense gods; and besides, to say that they are *like* to angels, with respect to their souls, which come from above, is to say no more of the judges of the earth than what may be said of every man: to which may be added, that this objector himself owns, that judges are called *אלהים gods*, as in *Exodus xxii. 9.* *the cause of both parties shall come before, אלהים the judges*; and that even the word is used in this sense in this very psalm, from whence these words are cited, *ψ. 1.* "He judgeth among אלהים the gods;" and both Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret this text itself in the same way, and observe, that judges are called gods, when they judge truly and aright: all which is sufficient to justify our Lord in the citation of this passage, and the use he makes of it.

35 If

(d) Mifn. Sanhedrim, c. 7. §. 4. (e) Bereshit Rabba, §. 96. fol. 83. 4. & Tzeror Hammor, fol. 134. 4. (f) Aben Ezra in Gen. xxvii. 39. & Abarbanel Mashmai Jeshua, fol. 5. 1. (g) R. Azarias in Meor Enayim, c. 7, fol. 47. 1. (h) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 91. 2.

(i) T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 32. 2.

(k) R. Isaac Chizuk

Emona, par. 2, c. 51, p. 442, 443.

35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;

If he called them gods, &c.] The Syriac version reads, "because the word of God came to them;" either the divine *Logos*, the essential Word, the Son of God, who appeared to Moses, and made him a god to Pharaoh, and who appointed rulers and magistrates among the Jews; and who is the King of kings, and Lord of lords, from whom all receive their power and dominion. This sense is favoured by the Ethiopic version, which renders it, "if he called them gods to whom God appeared, the word of God was with them:" or else the commission from God, authorizing them to act in the capacity of rulers and governors, is here meant; or rather, the word of God, which in the passage of scripture cited, calls them so, as it certainly does:

And the scripture cannot be broken] Or be made null and void; whatever that says is true, there is no contradicting it, or objecting to it: it is a Jewish way of speaking, much used in the Talmud (1); when one doctor has produced an argument, or instance, in any point of debate, another says, *איכא למיפוק* "it may be broken," or objected to, in such and such a manner, and be refuted: but the scripture cannot be broken, that is not to be objected to, there can be no confutation of that.

36 Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?

Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified] Not by making his human nature pure and holy, and free from all sin, and by bestowing the holy Spirit on him without measure, though both true; but these were upon, or after his mission into the world; whereas sanctification here, designs something previous to that, and respects the eternal separation of him to his office, as Mediator, in the counsel, purposes, and decrees of God, and in the covenant of his grace, being pre-ordained thereunto, before the foundation of the world; which supposes his eternal existence as a divine person, and tacitly proves his true and proper Deity:

And sent into the world] In human nature, to obtain eternal redemption and salvation for his people; to save them from sin, Satan, the world, law, hell and death, which none but God could do:

Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?] For what he had said in *John* 30. is equivalent

to it; and in it he was rightly understood by the Jews, and what he here and afterwards says confirms it: the argument is what the Jews call, *קל וחומר* "from the lesser to the greater," and stands thus; That if mere frail mortal men, and some of them wicked men, being made rulers and judges in the earth, are called *gods*, by God himself, to whom the word of God came in time, and constituted them gods, or governors, but for a time; and this is a fact stands recorded in scripture, which cannot be denied or disproved; then surely it cannot be blasphemy in Christ, to assert himself to be the Son of God, who existed as a divine person from all eternity; and was so early set apart to the office of prophet, priest, and king; and in the fulness of time, was sent into this world, to be the author of eternal salvation to the sons of men.

37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

If I do not the works of my Father] Not only what the Father had given him to finish, and which he wrought by him as man, but such as were as great as the Father had done, and were equal to them; and which could not be done by any, but by the Father, or by one that is equal with him,

Believe me not] Christ appeals to his miracles as proofs of his Deity, Sonship, and Messiahship, and desires no other credit than what they demand; see *Matt.* xi. 3, 4, 5. *John* v. 36.

38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.

But if I do] Works, which none but God can do:

Though ye believe not me] What Christ said in his doctrine and ministry, though they paid no regard to that, and did not receive his testimony, on the credit of him the testifier, as they ought to have done:

Believe the works] Not only that they are true and real, and not imaginary and delusory; but for the sake of them believe the above assertion, that Christ is the Son of God, he and his Father being one; or take such notice of these works and miracles, consider the nature, evidence, and importance of them, and the divine power that attends them,

That ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him] Or "in the Father," as one of Beza's exemplars; the Vulgate Latin, Persian, and Ethiopic versions read; or "in my Father," as read the Syriac and Arabic versions; that they are one

(1) T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 4. 1. & Beroth, fol. 32. 1. & passim.

one in nature, distinct in person, equal in power, and have a mutual inhabitation and communion in the divine essence; all which is manifest, by doing the same works, and which are out of the reach and power of any mere creature.

39 ¶ Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand,

Therefore they sought again to take him] Not to take away his life by stoning him, as before, in the manner the furious zealots did, and was the part they were about to act just now; but to lay hold upon him, and bring him before the sanhedrim, as they had done in chapter v. he being so far from clearing himself from the charge of blasphemy, they had brought against him, that in their opinion he had greatly strengthened it; and they thought they had now sufficient proof and evidence to convict him as a blasphemer, in their high court of judicature; and therefore attempted to lay hands on him, and bring him thither:

But he escaped out of their hand] Either by withdrawing from them in some private way; or by open force, exerting his power, and obliging them on every side to fall back, and give way to him; or by rendering himself invisible to them; and this he did, not through fear of death, but because his time was not yet come, and he had other work to do, before he suffered and died.

40 And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.

And went away again beyond Jordan] Where he had been before; and whither he went, not merely for the security of his person, much less to indulge himself in ease; but to preach the Gospel, work miracles, and bring many souls to believe on him, as he did: and he went

Into the place where John at first baptized] That is, Bethabara; where he baptized before he was at Enon, near Salim, John i. 28. and chap. iii. 23. and was the place where Christ himself was baptized, and where John bore such a testimony of him:

And there he abode] How long is not certain, perhaps till he went to Bethany, on account of raising Lazarus from the dead.

41 And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.

And many resorted to him] From all the parts adjacent, having heard of his being there, and of the fame of him; and many of them doubtless personally knew him; these came to him, some very

likely to be healed by him, others to see his person and miracles, and others to hear him preach:

And said, John did no miracle] Though it was now three years ago, yet the name, ministry, and baptism of John, were fresh in the memory of men in those parts; and what they say one to another was not to lessen the character of John, but to exalt Jesus Christ, and to give a reason why they should receive and embrace him; for if John, who did no miracle, who only taught and baptized, and directed men to the Messiah, was justly reckoned a very great person, and his doctrine was received, and his baptism was submitted to; then much more should this illustrious person be attended to, who besides his divine doctrine, did such great and amazing miracles; to which they add, though John did no miracle to confirm his mission, ministry, and baptism,

But all things that John spake of this man were true] As that he was greater than he, was the Lamb of God, yea, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, and true Messiah, who should baptize men with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

42 And many believed on him there.

Through the doctrine he preached, the miracles he wrought, and through comparing these things with what John had said of him: this shews the reason of Christ's leaving Jerusalem, and coming into these parts; there were others that were to believe in his name: the word *there*, is left out in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persian versions.

C H A P. XI.

In this chapter we have an account of Lazarus being sick at Bethany; his sisters send for Christ, x. 1—6. who travelleth towards Judea, x. 7—10. But in the mean time Lazarus dieth, x. 11—16. Christ goeth to Bethany, x. 17—19. whom Martha meeteth; and talks of the resurrection, x. 24—27. Christ weeping, cometh to the grave, x. 28—38. where he findeth Lazarus had been four days buried, x. 39, 40. and praying, raiseth him, x. 41—44. wherefore many believe in him, x. 45. others take counsel against him, x. 46. he departeth to Ephraim, x. 54—56. the chief priests give command concerning Christ, x. 57.

NOW a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

Now a certain man was sick] very likely of a fever; Nonnus calls it a morbid fire, a hot and burning disease:

Named Lazarus of Bethany] For his name, which the Ethiopic version reads Eleazar, and the Persian version

version Gazarus, see the note on *Luke* xvi. 24. and for the place Bethany, see the notes on *Matt.* xxi. 1, 17.

The town of Mary and her sister Martha] Where they were both born, as well as Lazarus, or at least where they dwelt; of the former, some account is given in the next verse, and of the latter, see the note on *Luke* x. 38.

2 (It was *that* Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment] Not the woman in *Luke* vii. 37. as some have thought, whose name is not mentioned, and which history is not related by John at all; but Mary in *John* xii. 3. who is both mentioned by name, and along with Lazarus her brother, and with whom all the circumstances of the affair suit; and though the fact was not yet done, yet John writing many years after it was done, and when it was well known, proleptically, and in a parenthesis, takes notice of it here:

And wiped his feet with her hair] Instead of a napkin, after she had anointed them with oil; see the notes on *Luke* vii. 37. and on *John* xii. 3.

Whose brother Lazarus was sick] This is observed, to shew how well they were all acquainted with Christ, and affected to him.

3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

Therefore his sisters sent unto him] Both the sisters of Lazarus, Mary and Martha, sent to Jesus; they did not go themselves, being women, and the place where Jesus was, was at some distance; and besides, it was necessary they should abide at home, to attend their brother in his sickness, and therefore they sent a messenger, or messengers to Christ,

Saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick] For it seems that Lazarus was in a very singular manner loved by Christ, as man, as John the beloved disciple was; and this is the rather put into the message by the sisters, to engage Jesus to come to his assistance; and they were very right in applying to Christ in this time of need, who is the physician, both of the bodies and souls of men; and are greatly to be commended both for their modesty and piety, in not prescribing to Christ what should be done in this case: and it may be further observed, that such who are the peculiar objects of Christ's love, are attended in this life with bodily sickness, disorders, and diseases, which are sent unto them, not in a way of vindictive

wrath, but in love, and as fatherly chastisements; which as they are designed, so they are over-ruled for their good; and are to be considered, not as instances of wrath, but as tokens of love.

4 When Jesus heard *that*, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

When Jesus heard that] That his friend Lazarus was sick,

He said] Either to his disciples, or to the messenger or messengers that brought the account to him, and that on purpose to yield some relief to the afflicted family when it should be reported to them,

This sickness is not unto death] It was to issue in death, but not in death which was to continue, or under which Lazarus was to continue till the general resurrection; for though he should die, yet he should be so quickly restored again to life, that it scarcely deserved the name of death. The Jews distinguish between sickness and sicknes; there are some that are *sick*, the greater part of whom are, חיים "for life;" and there are others that are *sicknes*, the greater part of whom are, מיתה "for death (a)," or are sick unto death, whose sickness issues in death; but this of Lazarus's was not to be unto death, at least not finally:

But for the glory of God] Of his power and goodness in raising him again:

That the Son of God might be glorified thereby] That is, that his glory, as the Son of God, might be made manifest in the resurrection of him from the dead; see chapter ii. 11.

5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

Not only with an everlasting love, a love of complacency and delight, an unchangeable one, and which never varies, nor will ever end, with which he loves all his people alike; but with a very great human affection, and which was very singular and peculiar to them: these were the intimate friends, and familiar acquaintance of Christ, whom he often visited, at whose house he frequently was when in those parts; they were very hospitable to him; they kindly received him into their houses, and generously entertained him, and which he returned in love to them: hence Nonnus paraphrases the words, "Jesus loved the women, φιλοξενος, "who were lovers of hospitality," by the law of "kindness."

6 When

(a) T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 71. 2.

6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

When he had heard therefore that he was sick] Though Christ had heard that Lazarus was sick, and by such good hands, a message being sent him by his sisters, to acquaint him with it; and though he had such a very great love for him, and the whole family, yet he did not go directly to him, and to his assistance: but

He abode two days still in the same place where he was] At Bethabara, beyond Jordan; this he did to try the faith and patience of the sisters of Lazarus, and that the miracle of raising him from the dead might be the more manifest, and his own glory might be the more illustrious, and yet equal, if not greater tenderness and love, be shewn to his friends.

7 Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judea again.

The next day, the third day after he had heard of Lazarus's sickness:

Let us go into Judea again] For the country beyond Jordan was distinguished from Judea; see Matt. iv. 25. and the note there.

8 His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?

His disciples said unto him, Master] Addressing him very reverently, and with great concern for his safety, as well as their own:

The Jews of late sought to stone thee] As they had attempted to do twice in a very little time; see chapter viii. 59. and x. 31.

And goest thou thither again?] Where there are so many enemies, and so much danger, and but little hope of doing much good; whereas here he was among his friends, and in safety, and very useful.

9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

Are there not twelve hours in the day?] So the Jews reckoned, and so they commonly say, *היי חיים שנים עשר שעות* (b) "twelve hours are a day;" or, a day consists of twelve hours; which they divided into four parts, each part consisting of three hours. This was a matter well known, and Christ

puts the question as such, it being what might be easily answered, and at once assented to:

If any man walk in the day] Within any of the twelve hours, even in the last of them,

He stumbleth not] At any stone or stumbling-block in the way,

Because he seeth the light of this world] The sun in the horizon not being as yet set, by the light of which he sees what is before him, and avoids it; see the note on chapter viii. 12. So our Lord intimates, that as yet it was day with him, his time of life was not expired; and so, as yet, it was a time of walking and working; nor did he fear any danger he was exposed to, or any snares that were laid for him, since he could not be hurt by any, nor his life taken from him before his time.

10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

But if a man walk in the night] After the sun is set, and there is no light in the air and heavens to direct him,

He stumbleth] At every thing that lies in the way.

Because there is no light in him] There being none from above communicated to him. So our Lord suggests, that when the time of his death was come, he should then fall a prey into the hands of his enemies, but till then he should walk safe and secure; nor had he any thing to fear from them, and therefore could go into Judea again with intrepidity and unconcern.

11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

These things said he] In answer to his disciples, and made a pause,

And after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth] Meaning, that he was dead; in which sense the word is often used in the Old Testament, and in the common dialect of the Jews, and frequently in their writings; and especially it is so used of good men: and it is an observation of theirs (c), that "It is usual to say of the righteous, that there is no death in them; *אין מות* "but sleep;" see the notes on Matt. ix. 24. 1 Cor. xv. 18, 20. 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14.

But I go, that I may awake him out of sleep] That is, to raise him from the dead, for the resurrection of the dead is expressed by awaking; see Psalm xvii. 15. Isaiah xix. 26. Dan. xii. 2. which for Christ to do, was as easy as to awake a man out of sleep.

(b) T. Bah. Sanhedrim, fol. 38. 2. Avoth Zera, fol. 3. 2. Vid. Philo. de Somniis, p. 1143.

of natural sleep: these words respecting Lazarus's sleeping and awaking, express both the omniscience and omnipotence of Christ; his omniscience, that he should know that Lazarus was dead, when at such a distance from him; and his omnipotence, that he could raise him from the dead; and yet his great modesty to signify it in such covert language, though not difficult to be understood.

12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep] Soundly, quietly, and comfortably, and takes rest in it,

He shall do well] Or *be saved* from the disease; he will be delivered from it; he will recover out of it; it is a sign the distemper is leaving him, and he is growing better, and will be restored to his health again. The Ethiopic version renders it by many words, "he will be well, and will awake, and will live." Sound sleep is a sign of health. This they said to put off their master from going into Judea, fearing the danger he would be exposed unto.

13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

Jesus spake of his death] Under the figurative phrase of sleeping:

But they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep] In a literal and natural sense.

14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

Then said Jesus unto them plainly] Without a figure, when he perceived they did not understand him, and yet it was a very easy and usual metaphor which he had made use of; but such was the present stupidity of their minds, that they did not take in his meaning: wherefore, without reproaching them with it, he said to them in so many words,

Lazarus is dead] The Perfic version reads, "Lazarus is dead indeed;" as he really was.

15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless, let us go unto him.

And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there] At Bethany, before he died, or when he died; because he might have been prevailed upon through the solicitations of his dear friends, Mary and Martha, and through tender affection to Lazarus, to have prevented his death, by rebuking the distemper, and restoring him to health, or to have raised him immediately as soon as he was dead; and in either case the miracle would not have been

so illustrious, nor have been such a means of confirming the faith of his disciples, as now it would be:

To the intent ye may believe] More strongly, that he was the Son of God, and true Messiah:

Nevertheless, let us go unto him] To Lazarus, to the grave where he lies: the Syriac version reads, "let us go there;" to Bethany, where he lived, and died, and now lay interred.

16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow-disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus] The former was his Hebrew name, and the latter his Greek name, and both signify a twin; and perhaps he may be so called because he was one: the same said

Unto his fellow-disciples] The other eleven; though the Ethiopic version reads, "to the next" of the disciples; as if he addressed himself only to one of them, to him that was nearest him:

Let us also go, that we may die with him] Either with Lazarus, as some think, or rather with Christ; for he, and the rest of the disciples, imagined that Christ, by returning to Judea, would be in great danger of losing his life; yea, by this expression they seem to be positive of it, that it was a matter out of question with them, that he would die, should he venture there again: and therefore Thomas stirs up his fellow-disciples to go along with him, and die all together; signifying, that they should have but little comfort when he was taken from them: but both Thomas, and the rest, were differently minded when Christ was apprehended, for they all forsook him and fled, and provided for their own safety, and left him to die alone, *Matt. xxvii. 56.*

17 Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already.

Then when Jesus came] The Alexandrian copy, and all the Oriental versions add, "to Bethany;" though it seems, by what follows, that he was not come to the town itself, but near it; and it looks as if it was not far from Lazarus's grave; and it was usual to bury without the city; and here he had intelligence of his, Lazarus's death, and how long he had been dead:

For he found that he had lain in the grave four days already] It is very likely that he died the same day that Mary and Martha sent to Christ to acquaint him with his sickness, and the same day he was buried; for the Jews used to bury the same day a person died, and so they do now: and after Christ had this account, he stayed two days where he was,

was, and on the third day he proposed to his disciples to go into Judea; and very probably on that, or on the next day, which was the fourth, they set out and came to Bethany; see the note on γ . 39.

18 Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off:

Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem] Which was a reason why there were so many of the Jews come there to condole the two sisters upon the death of their brother; and by this means the following miracle became more known there: it was

About fifteen furlongs off] That is, about two miles, for seven furlongs and a half made a Jewish mile, as appears from one of their canons (d), which runs thus: "They do not spread nets for doves, except it be distant from an habitable place] שלשים ריס "thirty furlongs;" which the commentators say (e) are four miles; and still more expressly it is said (f), that "Between Jerusalem and Zuck, (the place where the scape-goat was had) there were ten tents, and ninety furlongs, שבעה ומוצה לכל מיל "seven and a half to every mile." Hence a furlong was called one-seventh and a half of a mile (g), which was 266 cubits, and two-thirds of one.

19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

And many of the Jews came to Martha, &c.] Or "to those that were about Martha and Mary," in order to have access to them, they came to them, and to the rest of the family; though the phrase may design them only, as the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions read: these Jews, as appears from the context, γ . 18, 45, 46. came from Jerusalem, and might be some of the principal inhabitants; and it may be concluded, that these persons, Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, were people of note and figure; and indeed all the accounts of them here, and elsewhere, shew the same; see *Luke* x. 38. *John* xii. 1, 2, 3. The end of their coming to them was

To comfort them concerning their brother] By reason of his death, as was usual with the Jews to do, after the dead was buried; for they did not allow of it before. Hence that saying (h) of R. Simeon ben Eleazar, "Do not comfort him (thy friend) in the time his dead lies before him." The first office of this kind was done when they

returned from the grave; for it is said (i), "When they return from the grave they make rows round about the mourner, וַיֵּשְׁבּוּ "to comfort him;" and they make him to sit, and they stand, and there never were less than ten in a row." It was an ancient custom for the mourners to stand in their place in a row, and all the people passed by, and every man as he came to the mourner comforted him, and passed on (k). But besides these consolations, there were others administered at their own houses, which were usually done the first week: for it is said (l), "The mourner the first week does not go out of the door of his house. R. Judah says, There is no need to say, the first week he does not go out of the door of his house, for behold, all come to his house, לֵנְחוּ "to comfort him." And it was on the third day, more particularly, on which these consolatory visits were paid (m): "On the first day he (the mourner) did not wear his phylacteries; on the second, he put them on; on the third day, others come to comfort him." This rule the Jews here seem to have observed, since Lazarus, had been dead four days; and they were come from Jerusalem hither to comfort his sisters on account of his death. The whole of this ceremony is particularly related by Maimonides (n). This business of comforting mourners was reckoned an act of great piety and mercy (o); and these Jews here might come, not so much out of respect to the dead, or to his sisters, as because it was thought to be a meritorious act.

20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house.

Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming] Which she might hear of, either by a messenger sent by Christ to her, to acquaint her of it; or rather by some of the people of the town, who knew him, and ran and told her of it; and she being an active person, and stirring about the house, might receive the report unknown to her sister, as it seems she did; and as soon as she had the hint, without staying to communicate it to her sister,

Went and met him] Either through her great affection to him, and eager desire of seeing him; or to consult his safety, and let him know what number of Jews were in their house, that he might consider

(d) Misna Bava Kama, c. 7. $\S$. 7.

& Bartenora in ibid.

(e) Maimon. Jarchi

(f) Misn. Yoma, c. 6. $\S$. 4.

(g) T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 33. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Rotzeach,

c. 13. $\S$. 6.

(h) Pirke Abot, c. 4. $\S$. 18.

(i) Gloss. in Cetubot, fol. 8. 2. & in Beracot, fol. 16. 2.

(k) Gloss. in T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 19. 1.

(l) T. Bab.

Moed Katon, fol. 23. 1.

(m) Massech. Semachon c. 6.

fol. 14. 3.

(n) Hilch. Ebel, c. 23. $\S$. 4. 2, 3, 4.

(o) Maimon. in Misn. Peah, c. 1. $\S$. 1.

consider whether it would be safe for him to be at their house or not.

But Mary sat still in the house] Not out of disrespect to Jesus, or through want of affection to him, or through any indifference and sloth, but because she knew not that Jesus was coming; see *Mat.* 28, 29.

21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

This speech expresses much faith, but with a mixture of weakness, as if the presence of Christ was necessary for the working a cure; whereas he could as well have restored her brother to health absent, as present, had it been his will; as he did the centurion's servant, and the nobleman's son of Capernaum.

22 But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.

But I know that even now] At this distance of time, though her brother had been in the grave four days:

Whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee] Whether Martha had such a clear notion of the Deity of Christ, as yet, as she afterwards had, is not so certain: however, she was persuaded that he had great interest with God, and that whatever he desired of him was granted to him; and though she does not mention the resurrection of her brother, yet it seems to be what she had in view.

23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

Christ knew what she meant, and accordingly gave her an answer, and yet in such general terms, that she could not tell whether his meaning was that he should rise now, or at the general resurrection.

24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

Martha saith, &c.] Being desirous of knowing the sense and meaning of Christ, as well as to express her own faith;

I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day] The Jews were divided about the doctrine of the resurrection, the Sadducees denied it, the Pharisees asserted it; and on this latter side was Martha: she believed there would be a resurrection of the dead; that this would be at the last day, or at the end of the world; and that her

brother would rise at that general resurrection; wherefore, if Christ meant no more than that, this was what she always believed. The Syriac version renders it, "in the consolation at the last day;" and so the time of the resurrection is by the Jews called "the days of consolation (p)." And good reason there is for it in those who shall have part in the first resurrection, or shall come forth to the resurrection of life; their bodies will rise glorious, powerful, spiritual, and incorruptible, fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ; they will no more be attended with infirmities, disorders, and diseases; they will feel no more pain, nor die any more; being re-united to their souls, they will meet the Lord in the air, and in the judgment they will stand at his right hand; they will enter into his joy, and be for ever with him; with their bodily eyes they will behold Christ, and see him for themselves, and not another; they will meet their spiritual friends and acquaintance, and enjoy their company for ever; they will have uninterrupted communion with angels and saints, and with God, Father, Son, and Spirit; their consolation will be inconceivable and inexpressible.

25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life] Signifying, that he was able of himself to raise men from death to life, without asking it of his Father; and that he could do it now, as well as at the general resurrection; at which time Christ will be the efficient cause of it; and which will display both his omniscience and his omnipotence; as his resurrection is the earnest and pledge, and will be the model and exemplar of it. This is true of Christ, with regard to a spiritual resurrection from a death of sin to a life of grace; he is concerned both in the life itself, and in the resurrection to it: he is the meritorious and procuring cause of it; he died for his people, that they, being dead to sin, might live unto God, and unto righteousness: he is the author of it; he says unto them, when dead in sin, *live*; he speaks life into them; he commands it in them, and by his Spirit breathes into them the breath of spiritual life, and implants the principle of it in their souls; and he supports and maintains it by giving himself to them as the bread of life to feed upon, and by supplying them with grace continually; yea, he himself is their life; he lives in them, and their life is hid with him. It is owing to his resurrection, that they are begotten again to a lively

(p) Targum Jon. in Gen. i. 21. & in Hof. vi. 21.

lively hope, or are quickened; that has a virtual influence upon it; and it is not only the cause, but the exemplar of it. Saints, as they are planted together in the likeness of his death, so in the likeness of his resurrection: to which may be added, that it is his voice in the Gospel, attended with an almighty power, which is the means of quickening them, which they hear, and so live; and it is his image that is enstamped upon them; and by his Spirit they are made to live, and to walk in newness of life.

He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.] Believers in Christ die as well as others, though death is not a penal evil to them; its curse is removed, its sting is taken away, being satisfied for by Christ, and so becomes a blessing and privilege to them, and is desirable by them; but though they die, they shall live again; their dust is under the peculiar care of Christ; and they shall rise by virtue of union to him, and shall rise first, in the morning of the resurrection, and with peculiar privileges, or to the resurrection of life, and with the peculiar properties of incorruption, power, glory, and spirituality. So likewise such that have been dead in sin, and dead in law, under a sentence of condemnation, as all mankind are in Adam, and being in a natural and sinful estate, and as the chosen of God themselves are; yet being brought to believe in Christ, that is, to see the excellency and suitableness of him as a Saviour, and the necessity of salvation by him; to go out of themselves to him, disclaiming their own righteousness; venture their souls upon him, give up themselves to him, trust in him, and depend upon him for eternal life and salvation; these live spiritually: they appear to have a principle of life in them; they breathe after spiritual things; they see the Son of God, and behold his glory; they handle the word of life; they speak the language of Canaan, and walk by faith on Christ, as they have received him; they live a life of sanctification and justification; they are manifestly in Christ, and have him, an interest in him, and so must have life; they live comfortably; they live by faith on Christ and his righteousness, and have communion with him here, and expect to have, and shall have eternal life hereafter.

26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

And whosoever liveth and believeth in me.] Whoever will be found alive at Christ's second coming, and is a believer in him,

Shall never die.] But shall be changed, and shall be for ever with Christ; and such as shall be

raised to life by him, shall never die any more, not even a bodily death, and much less an eternal one, or the second death: and though believers die a corporal death as others do, yet their souls live, and live in happiness, while their bodies are under the power of death; nor shall they always continue so, but being raised, shall become immortal, and die no more. So living believers in Christ shall never die more a spiritual death; they are passed from death to life, and shall never return to death more; their spiritual life cannot be lost; grace in them is an immortal seed, a well of living water springing up into everlasting life: grace may be very low in its exercise, and may seem to be ready to die; they may be in lifeless frames, and without the comforts of a spiritual life, and be under the hidings of God's face, which is as death unto them, and may reckon themselves as free among the dead; yet the principle of life will never be extinct in them; nor shall they die the second death, which lies in an eternal separation from God, and in an everlasting sense of his wrath; that shall have no power on them, nor shall they be in the least hurt by it; for they are ordained to eternal life, and have the promise of it; they are united to Christ, and their life is secured in him; and he has redeemed them from death; and they have the spirit of life dwelling in them, as the pledge and earnest of eternal glory.

Believest thou this?] The whole of this concerning the power of Christ, and privilege of believers; every tittle of it is to be believed. And as with respect to a corporal resurrection, so with regard to a spiritual one; that men by nature are dead in sins; that Christ is the author of the resurrection from such a state, to a spiritual life; that this life is only by Christ, and can never be lost: this is a doctrine to be believed; it is the doctrine of the scriptures; it is according to godliness; it makes for the comfort of the people of God, and glorifies the divine perfections.

27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

She saith unto him, Yea, Lord.] That is, she firmly believed all that he said concerning himself, and the happiness of those that believed in him: and for the confirmation of it adds,

I believe.] Or, "I have believed," as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; that is, long ago, ever since she knew him:

That thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.] That he was the true Messiah, and the proper and natural Son of God, of

X of the same nature with God, equal to him, having the same perfections with him; and who was long promised, much prophesied of, and greatly expected to come into the world; and was now come into the world by the assumption of human nature, to work out salvation for his people; and therefore, since she believed all this of him, she must believe that he was able to raise the dead to life, and to secure those that believe in him from dying eternally.

28 And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

And when she had so said] When she had expressed her faith in Christ in such terms, as the apostles themselves did, *Matt. xvi. 16. John i. 49. and chap. vi. 69.*

She went her way] From Christ, being ordered by him to go to her sister Mary, and fetch her to him:

And called Mary her sister secretly] Either beckoned her to come to her, or whispered her in the ear privately, as Nonnus paraphrases it, that the Jews, who were enemies to Christ, might not hear:

Saying, The master is come] Near the town; is not a great way off: she might use the phrase, *the master*, for greater privacy, that should she be over-heard, it would not be known who she meant; and because it was an usual appellation by which Christ was called in that family, and by which he was well known; and was expressive of honour to him, and subjection in them as his disciples:

And calleth for thee] To come to him: Christ asked after her, desired to see her, and ordered her to come to him; which was an instance of his respect for her.

29 As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quickly, and came unto him.

When she heard that Christ was come, and inquired for her, and wanted to see her: she having an equal affection for him as her sister Martha; shewed it by leaving her comforters at once, and by making the haste she did, to another and better comforter: both Martha and Mary, out of their great love to Christ, break through the rule for mourners mentioned in *ψ. 19.* of not going out of the door of the house the first week of mourning.

30 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.

Now Jesus was not yet come into the town] Of Bethany, but staid without, being nearer to Lazarus's grave, which he intended to go to, in order to raise him to life, it being usual to bury the dead without the towns and cities; see the notes on *Matt. viii. 28. and Luke vii. 12.*

But was in that place where Martha met him] Here he stopped, and here he continued: the Persian version reads, "but was sitting in the same place," &c. waiting for the coming of Mary along with Martha; judging this to be a more suitable place to converse together in, than their own house, which was thronged with Jews, and especially he chose it for the reason above given.

31 The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.

The Jews then which were with her in the house] Who came from Jerusalem to visit this afflicted family, and continued in the house with them:

And comforted her] Which was the end of their coming, *ψ. 19.* This they endeavoured to do, though they did not succeed:

When they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her] They did not know what Martha whispered to her, but observed that she rose off her seat in great haste, and went out of the house at once; and therefore they went after to see where she went, and to persuade her to return; saying, within themselves; thinking, as all the Oriental versions seem to read,

She goeth unto the grave to weep there] The Jews were wont to go to the graves on different accounts; one was to see whether the persons were dead or no: for so it is said (*q*), "They go to the graves and visit until three days." It happened that they visited one, and he lived five and twenty years, and after that died: and another was on a religious account; such went to the graves of the prophets, wise men, and righteous, and prostrated themselves upon them, to pray with weeping and supplication, and seek mercy for themselves, and for their brethren, expressing their faith in the resurrection (*r*). Dr Pocock (*s*) has given a large form of prayer used by them at such times, from Solomon bar Nathan. But sometimes they went only to vent their grief, and lament the loss of their deceased friends, which the Jews imagined was the case of Mary. And such a custom as this is used

(*q*) *Massch. Semachot*, c. 8, fol. 15. 2.

(*r*) *Cippi Heb.* p. 3, 4.

(*s*) *Misc. not. in port. Moss.* p. 224, fol. 16: 2.

used by the Turks, whose women on Friday, which is their day of worship, go before sun-rising to the graves of the deceased, which are without the city, where they mourn over the death of their friends, and sprinkle their monuments with water and flowers; and even such as are not at the funeral or interment of the dead, after some days, will go to the graves, and make their lamentations there, and inquire of the dead the reason of their departure; and, as it were, expostulate with them, and to their lamentations add oblations of loaves, cheese, eggs, and flesh (t). The Persians also visit the sepulchres of their principal Imams, or prelates (u); and the Jews were wont to visit the graves of their great men, in honour to them; yea, the disciples of the wise men used to meet there to study the law, thereby shewing respect, and doing honour to the deceased. It is said of Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxxii. 33. *that all Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, did him honour at his death*; from whence, say the Talmudists (x), we learn, that they fixed a sitting or a school at his grave; the gloss is, a session (or school) of the wise men to study in the law there. So says Maimonides (y), when a king dies they make a sitting at his grave seven days, as it is said, 2 Chron. xxxii. 33. *They did him honour at his death*; that is, they made a sitting at his grave.

32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

Then, when Mary was come where Jesus was] Where Martha met him, and where she left him, Travellers tell us, that close by a well, about a furlong's cast out of the town of Bethany, is shewed the place where Martha met our Lord when he came to raise Lazarus, and where Mary, being called also, met him; but this is not to be depended on, nor is it of any moment to know it. It is blessed meeting Christ any where: and where he is preached, and his ordinances administered, let it be in what place it will, there may the presence of Christ be expected; and it is an encouragement to go there where others have met with him. Martha had been here before, and had had some conversation with Christ to her great satisfaction, and she goes and calls her sister, that she might enjoy the same: so souls that have met with Jesus under such a ministry, in such a place, invite others to go thither also; and often it is that this is a means, in providence, of finding Christ, and enjoying communion with him.

And saw him, she fell down at his feet] In great respect to him, and reverence of him, worshipping him as her Lord and God.

Saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died] Which were the same words Martha uttered upon her first meeting Jesus, y. 21. and it is very likely that they had often expressed themselves in such language one to another, saying to each other, If our Lord Jesus had been but here, our dear brother Lazarus would not have died.

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,

When Jesus therefore saw her weeping] At his feet, who, for sorrow and grief of heart, could say no more to him; but having expressed these words, burst out into floods of tears:

And the Jews also weeping which came with her] Either through sympathy with her, or hypocritically:

He groaned in the spirit] In his human soul; and which shews, that he had a real human soul, subject to passions, though sinless ones. The word signifies an inward motion of the mind, through indignation and anger; and it may be partly at the weakness of Mary's faith, and at her immoderate sorrow; and partly at the hypocrisy of the Jews: or else this inward groaning was through grief, sympathizing with Mary and her friends; his human soul being touched with a fellow-feeling of their griefs and sorrows:

And was troubled] Or troubled himself; threw himself into some forms and gestures of sorrow and mourning, as lifting up his eyes, wringing his hands, and changing the form of his countenance.

34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see.

And said, Where have ye laid him?] This he might say as man, though he, as the omniscient God, knew where he was laid; and that it might appear there was no juggle and contrivance between him, and the relations of the deceased; and to raise some expectation of what he intended to do; and to draw the Jews thither, that they might be witnesses of the miracle he was about to work.

They said unto him] That is, Martha and Mary, *Lord, come and see*] It being but a little way off.

35 Jesus wept.

As he was going along to the grave, see y. 28. as he was meditating upon the state of his friend Lazarus, the distress his two sisters were in, and the greater damnation that would befall the Jews then.

(t) Gejer. de Ebreor. Luch, c. 6. §. 26.

de Reliq. Mohammed, l. 1. p. 72.

Kama, fol. 16. 2.

(u) Reland.

(x) T. Bab. Bava

(y) Hillehot Ebel, c. 14. §. 25.

then present, who, notwithstanding the miracle, would not believe in him. This shews him to be truly and really man, subject to like passions, only without sin.

36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

Then said the Jews Behold how he loved him! That is, Lazarus; for they supposed that these tears were shed purely on his account; and by all circumstances they could not but judge, that they proceeded from an hearty and sincere affection to him; and it was amazing to them, that his love to him should be so strong, when he was no relation, only as they imagined, a common friend. Christ's love to all his people, even when they are dead in trespasses and sins, is wonderful, and passes knowledge. And it is amazing indeed, if it be considered who the lover is, the eternal Son of God, who is God over all, blessed for ever, the Creator of all things, the King of kings, and Lord of lords: and also, who they are that are loved by him; not only creatures, but sinful ones, exceeding mean and abject; the base things of this world; bankrupts, beggars, yea, comparable to the beasts that perish; who had nothing external, nor internal, to recommend them to him, and engage his affections; yea, every thing to give him an aversion to them, and render them odious in his sight, being enemies in their minds by wicked works, and children of wrath, as others: and likewise, if it be considered, what he has done for these, in which his love appears to them; as before time, in espousing their persons, becoming their surety, engaging in covenant with his Father for them, agreeing to all he proposed, taking the care of their persons, and of all blessings and promises, grace and glory for them; and in time here on earth, by assuming their nature, fulfilling the law for them, dying in their room and stead, paying their debts, procuring all blessings for them, peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal redemption; and now in heaven, by preparing a place for them, being their intercessor and advocate there, supplying their wants, frequently visiting them, and indulging them with communion with himself, preserving them safe to his kingdom and glory, into which he will introduce them, presenting them to his Father with exceeding joy; all which are marvellous acts of love and grace: to which may be added, the consideration of the nature of his love, that it should be from everlasting, before these persons were born; that it should be a love of complacency and delight in them; that it should be free, and unmerited, without any reason, or motive on their part; that it should be distinguishing, that they, and not others, should be the ob-

jects of it; and that it should continue unchangeably the same, notwithstanding their manifold transgressions, and provocations; wherefore it may be justly said, *Behold, how he loved them!*

37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?

And some of them said Who were averse to him, and bore him a secret grudge, and were willing to put the worst construction on every action of his,

Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind As it is said, at least pretended, that he did, chapter ix. 6, 7. for this must be understood as calling the miracle into question, and as a sneer upon it, and not as taking it for granted that so it was; and even supposing that, it is mentioned to his reproach, since if so, he might

Have caused that even this man should not have died For either the above cure was a sham, or if it was a real thing, he who did that could have prevented Lazarus's death; and if he could, and would not, where is his friendship? And what must be thought of all this shew of affection to him? And what are these tears, but crocodile ones? But this reasoning, as specious as it may seem, was very fallacious; for he that cured the man born blind, could raise Lazarus from the dead, which he intended; and therefore did not prevent his death, that he might still give more joy to the family, bring more glory to God and himself, and more shame and confusion to his enemies.

38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

Jesus therefore groaning in himself Not only through grief, just coming up to the grave where his dear friend lay, but through an holy anger and indignation at the malice and wickedness of the Jews:

Cometh to the grave. It was a cave Either a natural one, such as were in rocks and mountains, of which sort there were many in Judea, and near Jerusalem, being a rocky and mountainous country; of which Josephus (2) makes mention; where thieves and robbers sheltered themselves, and could not easily be come at, and where persons in danger fled for safety, and hid themselves; and the reason why such places were chose to bury in, was because, here the bodies

(2) Antiq. l. 14. c. 15. §. 5.

bodies were safe from beasts of prey: or this was an artificial cave made out of a rock, in form of one, as was the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea; and it was the common custom of the Jews to make caves to bury in; yea, they were obliged to it by their traditions: Thus says Maimonides (a), "He that sells a place to his friend to make in it a grave, or that receives from his friend a place to make in it a grave, עושה מערה" must make a cave," and open in it eight graves, three on one side and three on another, and two over against the entrance into the cave; the measure of the cave is four cubits by six. And elsewhere (b) he observes, that they dig מערות caves in the earth," and make a grave in the side of the cave, and bury him (the dead) in it." And such caves for burying the dead, were at and near the mount of Olives; and near the same must be this cave where Lazarus was buried; for Bethany was not far from thence: so in the *Cippi Hebraici* we read (c), that at the bottom of the mount (of Olives) is a very great cave, said to be Haggai the prophet's; and in it are many caves—And near it is the grave of Zachariah the prophet, in a cave shut up; and frequent mention is made there of caves in which persons were buried; see the note on *Matthew* xxiii. 29. perhaps the custom of burying in them might take its rise from the cave of Machpelah, which Abraham, their father, bought for a burying-place for his dead. The sepulchre of Lazarus is pretended (d) to be shewn to travellers to this day, over which is built a chapel of marble, very decent, and comely, and stands close by a church built in honour of Martha and Mary, the two sisters of Lazarus, in the place where their house stood; but certain it is, that the grave of Lazarus was out of the town:

And a stone lay upon it] Our version is not so accurate, nor so agreeable to the form of graves with the Jews, nor to this of Lazarus's; their graves were not as ours, dug in the earth and open above, so as to have a stone laid over them; for they often were, as this, caves in rocks, either natural, or hewn out of them by art; and there was a door at the side of them, by which there was an entrance into them; and at this door a stone was laid: it would be better rendered here, "and a stone was laid to it;" not upon it, for it had no opening above, but to it, at the side of it; and accordingly, the Syriac and Persic versions read, "a stone was laid at the door of it;" and the Arabic version, "and there was a great stone at the door of it;" as there was at the door of

Christ's sepulchre. In the Jewish sepulchres there was, חצר "a court (e)," which was before the entrance into the cave; this was four-square; it was six cubits long and six broad; and here the bearers put down the corps, and from hence it was carried into the cave, at which there was an entrance sometimes called פה המערה "the mouth of the cave (f);" and sometimes, פתח הקבר "the door of the grave (g);" of its form, measure, and place, there is no express mention in the Jewish writings: it is thought to be about a cubit's breadth, and was on the side thereof; so that at it, the cave might be looked into; and at the mouth of it there was a stone put to stop it up, which was called גולל from its being rolled there; though that with which the mouth of the cave was shut up, was not always a stone, nor made of stone. Maimonides (b) says, it was made of stone, or wood, or the like matter; and so in the *Misna* (i) it is said, "גולל לקבר" the "covering for a grave," (or that with which it is stopped up) if it be made of a piece of timber, whether it stands, or whether it inclines to the side, does not defile, but over-against the door only;" see the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 60.

39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.

Jesus said, Take ye away the stone] This was said either to the Jews, or rather to the servants that came along with Martha and Mary; and this he ordered, not to facilitate the resurrection, or merely in order to make way for Lazarus: he that could command him to come forth, could have commanded away the stone; but he chose to have it removed this way, that the corps might be seen, and even smelt; and that it might be manifest, there was no fallacy, nor any intrigue between him and the sisters of the deceased in this matter: this order was contrary to the rules of the Jews, which forbid the opening of a grave after it was stopped up (k); but a greater than the fathers of the traditions was here, even he who has the keys of hell, or the grave, and can open, or order it to be opened, when he pleases:

Martha, the sister of him that was dead] That is, of Lazarus, as the Persic version expresses it, calling him, Gazarus;

Saith

(a) *Hilchot Mecira*, c. 21. §. 6.

(b) *Hilchot Ebel*,

c. 4. §. 4.

(c) *Pag.* 27, 29. *Ed.* Hottinger.

(d) *Itinerar.* Bunting, p. 364.

(e) *Misn.* Bava Bathra, c. 6. §. 3.

(f) *Misn.* *ibid.*

(g) *Maimon.* R. Samson, & Bartenora in *Misn.* *Ohalot*, c. 15. §. 3.

(h) In *Misn.* *Ohalot*, c. 2. §. 4.

(i) *Ibid.* c. 15. §. 3.

(k) *Apud* Buxtorf, *Lex. Rab.* col. 437.

Saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh] Or *smells*; not that she perceived this upon their moving the stone, but she concluded it from the time he had been dead, and had lain in the grave, in which dead bodies usually putrify and smell: whether she said this out of respect to her brother, being unwilling he should be exposed to the view of persons in such a state of corruption, she knew he must now be; or whether out of respect to Christ, lest he should be disordered with the offensive smell, is not certain: however, it seems as if she had no notion that Christ was about to raise her brother from the dead; and that the stone was commanded to be removed for that purpose, not merely for a sight of the dead, but that the dead might be seen to come forth alive: she imagined that Christ only wanted to have the stone removed, that he might have a sight of his deceased friend, which she thought would be very disagreeable and nauseous; so soon had she forgot what Christ had said to her, and lost that little exercise she had of faith and hope, with respect to the resurrection of her brother. Frames of soul, and acts of grace, are very changeable, and uncertain things; and especially when carnal reason is indulged.

For he hath been dead four days] He had been so long in the grave, *ſ. 17.* The word *dead* is not in the text; he might have been dead longer; though the Jews usually buried on the same day a person died: however, the sense is here, he had been so long in the grave; and so the Persian version renders it; "for it is the fourth day that he has been in the grave;" in the original text it is, "he is one of four days;" so many days he had been in the house appointed for all living; so long he had been removed from the sight of men, and had been in another world, and had begun another æra, and four days had passed in it; he was so many days old, according to that: so that his countenance was changed, he was not fit to be seen, nor approached unto; nor was there any hope of his returning to life. The Jews (*l*) say, that "For three days the soul goes to the grave, thinking the body may return; but when it sees the figure of the face changed, it goes away, and leaves it, as it is said, *Job xiv. 22.*" So of Jonah's being three days and three nights in the whale's belly, they say (*m*), "These are the three days a man is in the grave, and his bowels burst; and after three days that defilement is turned upon his face." Hence they do not allow any one to bear witness of one that is dead or killed, that he is such an one, after three days, because then his

countenance is changed (*n*), and he cannot be well known.

40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee] Not in so many words, but what might be concluded from what he said; yea, the following express words might be delivered by Christ, in his conversation with Martha, though they are not before recorded by the Evangelist:

That if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God] A glorious work of God, wherein the glory of his power and goodness would be displayed, and the Son of God be glorified; or she should see such a miracle wrought, as should engage her to glorify God; and on account of which, she should see just reason to do it, and would be concerned in it; and when it would appear that the sickness and death of her brother, which had given her and her sister so much distress and uneasiness, were for the glory of God, and the honour of Christ; see *ſ. 4.* Moreover, to "see the glory of God," is to see Christ, who is *the brightness of his Father's glory*; and though she had a sight of him now, and before this time, with her bodily eyes, and also with the eyes of her understanding, and knew that he was the Son of God, and the true Messiah; yet it is suggested, that upon a fresh and strong exercise of faith on Christ, with respect to the resurrection of her brother, and by means of that, she should have a clearer view of his glory, as the only-begotten of the Father; for as he was declared to be the Son of God, by his own resurrection from the dead: afterwards, so he was more fully manifested to be that glorious and divine person, by his raising others from the dead, than by any other miracle; and to be indulged with such a sight of him, is a very high favour; see *Psal. lxiii. 2.* and such who have their faith most in exercise, see much of the glory of God, both in the face of Christ, and in his providences, and the performance of his promises.

41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

Then they took away the stone] "From the door of the sepulchre," as the Arabic version adds;

From

(*l*) Bereshit Rabba, *ſ. 100. fol. 38. 2.* & T. Hieros. Moed Katon, fol. 82. 2.

(*m*) Zohar in Exod. fol. 78. 2.

(*n*) Mifn. Yebamot, c. 16. *ſ. 3.* & Maimon. Jarehl, & Bartenora in ibid. & Maimon. Hilchot Gersushim, c. 13. *ſ. 21.* T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 120. 1, & Gloss. in ibid.

From the place where the dead was laid] This clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions:

And Jesus lifted up his eyes] To heaven; this is a praying gesture, as in chapter xvii. 1.

And said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me] Which cannot refer to the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead, or to any assistance given him in performing that miracle, because that as yet was not done; and when it was done, was done by his own power, as all the circumstances of it shew: but it relates to every thing in which he had before heard him, and was a foundation for him, as man, to believe he still would, in whatever was to come; and particularly to the present opportunity of shewing his power in so remarkable a manner, and before so many witnesses.

42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

And I knew that thou hearest me always] Which was not only a support to the faith of Christ, as man, but is also to his people, whose advocate, intercessor, and mediator he is.

But because of the people which stand by I said it] That he was heard, and always heard by God; and therefore must have great interest in his affection, and knowledge of his will; yea, their wills must be the same:

That they may believe that thou hast sent me] For if he had not sent him, he would never have heard him in any thing, and much less in every thing; wherefore this was a full proof, and clear evidence of his divine mission.

43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

And when he thus had spoken] To God his Father, in the presence and hearing of the people;

He cried with a loud voice] Not on account of the dead, but for the sake of those around him, that all might hear and observe; and chiefly to shew his majesty, power and authority, and that what he did was open and above-board, and not done by any secret superstitious and magical whisper; and as an emblem of the voice and power of his Gospel in quickening dead sinners, and of the voice of the archangel and trumpet of God, at the general resurrection:

Lazarus, come forth] He calls him by his name, not only as being his friend, and known by him, but to distinguish him from any other corps that

might lie interred in the same cave, and he bids him come forth out of the cave, he being quickened and raised immediately by the power which went forth from Christ as soon as ever he lifted up his voice; which shewed him to be truly and properly God, and to have an absolute dominion over death and the grave.

44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

And he that was dead came forth] That is, he who had been dead, being now made alive, and raised up, and set on his feet, came out of the cave:

Bound hand and foot with grave-clothes] Not that his hands were bound together, and much less his hands and feet together, with any bands or lists of cloth; but his whole body, as Nonnus expresses it, was bound with grave-clothes from head to foot, according to the manner of the eastern countries, Jews, Egyptians, and others, who used to wrap up their dead in many folds of linen cloth, as infants are wrapped in swaddling-bands; and their manner was to let down their arms and hands close by their sides, and wind up all together from head to foot: so that there was another miracle besides that of raising him from the dead; that in such a situation, in which he could have no natural use of his hands and feet, he should rise up, stand on his feet, walk, and come forth thus bound, out of the cave:

And his face was bound about with a napkin] The use of which was not only to tie up the chin and jaws, but to hide the grim and ghastly looks of a dead corps; and one of the same price and value was used by rich and poor: for it is said (o), "The wise men introduced a custom of using, סוּר "a napkin," (the very word here used, which Nonnus says is Syriac) of the same value, not exceeding a penny, that he might not be ashamed who had not one so good as another; and they cover the faces of the dead, that they might not shame the poor, whose faces were black with famine." For it seems (p), "Formerly they used to uncover the faces of the rich, and cover the faces of the poor, because their faces were black through want, and the poor were ashamed; wherefore they ordered, that they should cover the faces of all, for the honour of the poor."

Jesus

(o) Maimon, Hilchot Ebel, c. 4. §. 1.
Moed Katoh, fol. 27. 1.

(p) T. Bab.

Jesus saith unto them] To the servants that stood by :

Loose him, and let him go] Unwind the linen rolls about him, and set his hands and feet at liberty, and let him go to his own house.

45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

Then many of the Jews which came to Mary] To her house, to comfort her, and that came along with her to the grave :

And had seen the things which Jesus did] In raising the dead body of Lazarus, and causing him to walk, though bound in grave-clothes :

Believed on him] That he was the true Messiah : such an effect the miracle had on them ; so that it was a happy day for them, that they came from Jerusalem to Bethany to pay this visit.

46 But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees] At Jerusalem, who were members of the sanhedrim ; so far were some of them from receiving any advantage by this miracle, that they were the more hardened and filled with malice and envy to Christ, and made the best of their way to acquaint his most inveterate enemies :

And told them what things Jesus had done] At Bethany ; not to soften their minds, and bring them to entertain a good opinion of him, but to irritate them, and put them upon schemes to destroy him. Thus even miracles, as well as the doctrines of the Gospel, are to some the savour of death unto death, whilst they are to others the savour of life unto life.

47 ¶ Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we ? for this man doeth many miracles.

Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council] They convened the sanhedrim, the great council of the nation, together, of which they were some of the principal members :

And said, What do we ?] That is, Why is nothing done ? Why are we so dilatory ? Why do we sit still, and do nothing ? or, What is to be done ? This now lies before us, this is to be considered and deliberated on :

For this man doeth many miracles] This is owned, and could not be denied by them ; and should have been a reason why they should have acknowledged him to have been the Messiah, and

embraced him ; whereas they used it as a reason why they should think of, and concert some measures, to hinder and put a stop to the belief of him as such.

48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him : and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.

If we let him thus alone] Going about from place to place, teaching the people, and doing such miracles :

All men will believe on him] The whole nation will receive him as the Messiah, and proclaim him their king, and yield a cheerful obedience to all his commands :

And the Romans will come] Against us, with their powerful armies ; interpreting the setting him up as Messiah, to be an instance of rebellion against Cæsar, and his government :

And take away both our place and nation] That is, will destroy the temple, their holy place, the place of their religion and worship ; and their city, the place of their habitation, and lay waste their country ; and take away from them that little share of power and government they had, and strip them both of their civil and religious privileges. The Perfic version renders it, " they will take away our place, and make a decree against our religion."

49 And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

And one of them, named Caiaphas] See the notes on Matt. xxvii. 3. Luke iii. 2. John xviii. 13. &

Being the high priest that same year] The high priesthood originally was not annual, but for life ; but towards the close of the second temple, it came into the hands of the king, to appoint who he would to be high priest (*q*) ; and it became venal ; it was purchased with money ; inasmuch that they changed the priesthood once a twelve-month, and every year a new high priest was made (*r*). Now this man being in such an high office, and a man of no conscience, and of bad principles, being a Sadducee, as seems from Acts iv. 6. and chap. v. 17. who denied the resurrection the dead, and was unconcerned about a future state ; and having no restraint upon him, in a bold, haughty, and blustering manner,

Said unto them, Ye know nothing at all] Ye are a parcel of ignorant and stupid creatures, mere fools and

(*q*) Mifn. Yebamot, c. 6. §. 4. fol. 3. 2. Joehasin, fol. 139. 1.

(*r*) T. Bab. Yoma,

and idiots, to sit disputing and arguing, *pro* and *con*, about such a fellow as this; what is to be done is obvious enough, and that is, to take away this man's life, without any more ado; it matters not what he is, nor what he does; these are things that are not to be considered, they are out of the question: would you save the nation, destroy the man; things are come to this crisis, that either his life must go, or the nation perish; and which is most expedient, requires no time to debate about.

50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

Nor consider that it is expedient for us] Priests, Levites, Pharisees, the sanhedrim, and ecclesiastical rulers of the people; who, as Caiaphas apprehended, must suffer in their characters and revenues, must quit their honourable and gainful posts and places, if Jesus went on and succeeded at this rate: wherefore it was most expedient and advantageous for them, which was the main thing to be considered in such a council, so he thought it was,

That one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not] He proceeded entirely upon this political principle, that a public good ought to be preferred to a private one; that it was no matter what the man was, whether innocent or not; common prudence, and the public safety of the nation, required him to fall a sacrifice, rather than that the Romans should be exasperated and provoked to such a degree, as to threaten the utter ruin and destruction of the whole nation.

51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

And this spake he not of himself] Nor of his own devising and dictating, but by the Spirit of God; as a wicked man sometimes may, and as Balaam did; the Spirit of God dictated the words unto him, and put them into his mouth; nor did he use them in the sense, in which the Holy Ghost designed them:

But being high priest that year] By his office he was the oracle of God, and was so esteemed by the people, and therefore a proper person to be made use of in this way; and especially being high priest that year, in which the priesthood was to be changed, and vision and prophecy to be sealed up:

He prophesied] Though he did not know he did, as did Pharaoh, *Exod. x. 28.* and the people of the Jews, *Matt. xxvii. 25.*

That Jesus should die for that nation] These words, with what follows in the next verse, are the words

of the Evangelist, interpreting the prophecy of Caiaphas, according to the sense of the Holy Ghost, that Jesus should die, which was contrary to a notion the Jews had imbibed concerning the Messiah; see chapter xii. 34. But Jesus the true Messiah must die; this was determined in the counsel of God, agreed to by Christ in the covenant of grace, foretold by the prophets from the beginning of the world, typified by sacrifices and other things under the former dispensation, predicted by Christ himself, and accordingly came to pass; and upon the above accounts was necessary, as well as for the salvation of his people, who otherwise must have perished; and yet was free and voluntary in him, and a strong expression, and a demonstrative proof of his love to them: and not only this prophecy declared that Jesus should die, but that he should die for that nation, for the nation of the Jews: not for every individual in it, for all of them were not saved by him; some received him not; they rejected him as the Messiah, Saviour, and Redeemer, and died in their sins; but for all the elect of God among them, the sheep of the house of Israel, to whom he was sent, and whom he came to seek and save; and whom he blessed, by turning them away from their iniquities, and by taking away their iniquities from them: and moreover, this prophecy suggests, that Jesus was to die, not merely as a martyr, to confirm with his blood the doctrine he preached, nor only as an example of courage, meekness, patience, and love; but for, or in the room and stead of his people, as their surety; giving his life a ransom, and himself a sacrifice to the justice of God for them; thereby fulfilling the law, and satisfying it, and appeasing the wrath of God on their account.

52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

And not for that nation only] For though Christ, as a prophet, was sent to the Jews only, and was the minister of the circumcision, yet as a priest he did not die for them only, but for the Gentiles also; even for the whole mystical Israel of God, all the world over, whether among Jews or Gentiles; see *1 John ii. 2.*

But that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad] By which may be meant, not only the elect of God among the Jews, who were scattered amidst the nations of the world, for whom Christ died, and to whom the Gospel was in the first place sent, and who were gathered together into a Gospel-church-state; see *John vii. 35. 1 Peter i. 1, 2. James i. 1.* but rather, the elect of God among the Gentiles, called

the

the children of God, in opposition to a notion of the Jews, who took this character to themselves, on account of their national adoption, and denied it to the Gentiles, reckoning them no other than as dogs; and because they were the children of God by special adoption, in divine predestination, and in the covenant of grace; and were so considered, when given to Christ, who looked upon them as in this relation, when he assumed their nature, and died in their room and stead; and not merely because they would hereafter appear to be the children of God in regeneration, and by faith in Christ Jesus, and have the witnessings of the Spirit that they were so; and much less because they had a fitness and disposition to be the children of God, since they were by nature, as others, children of wrath: and these are said to be scattered abroad, both from God, as they were by the fall, and by their own transgressions; which separated between God and them, and set them at a distance from him; for in their nature-head, and nature-state, they are afar off from him, and from one another; which may regard not only distance of place, being scattered about in the several parts of the world, but their disagreement in mind and judgment, in religion and manners; every one pursuing his own way, going astray like lost sheep: now Christ died for them, in order to bring them nigh to God, to the one true and living God; and to gather them together under one head, himself, their common head; by whom they were represented in his crucifixion, burial, and resurrection; and to make them one body, and bring them into one fold, into one church-state here, and at last to one place, to heaven, there to be for ever with him; and so the Perfic version renders it, "that he might gather them into one place:" and in this, the red heifer was a type of Christ; whose blood was sprinkled directly before the tabernacle of the congregation, and without the camp; and which was done, as a Jewish writer says (s), "To call to mind the design of the heifer, which was to bring חמור וקמור those that were afar off" from the camp of the Shechinah, to be near unto it."

53 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.

Then from that day forth] Caiaphas's reasoning appeared so good, and his advice so agreeable, that it was at once, and generally assented to, except by one or two, as Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea; that ever after this,

They took counsel together] At certain times, and very often, and agreed in their counsel,

For to put him to death] This they resolved upon, before there was any legal process, before any

crime was charged upon him, or any proof given, or he was heard what he had to say for himself; so highly approved of was Caiaphas's motion, to put him death, right or wrong, whether he was innocent or not; that they had nothing to do, but to consult of ways and means of getting him into their hands, and of taking away his life in a manner, as would be most for their own credit among the people, and to his shame and disgrace, and at the most proper and suitable time.

54 Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.

Jesus therefore] Knowing the resolution the sanhedrim had taken to put him to death, and the schemes they were forming to apprehend him:

Walked no more openly among the Jews] At, or near Jerusalem; he did not teach in their streets, nor work miracles, nor appear in public company:

But went thence] From Bethany:

Unto a country near to the wilderness] Whether this was the wilderness of Judea, where John came preaching, and near to which our Lord was before he came to Bethany, or the wilderness of Bethaven, Joshua xviii. 12. is not certain:

Into a city called Ephraim] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Perfic versions call it Ephrem, and so some copies; it seems to be the same with the Ephraim of the Misnic and Talmudic doctors; concerning which they say (r), "Micmas and Mezonicha, are the first for fine flour, and the next to them is Ephraim in the valley." For it seems there were two Ephraims, one in the valley, and another in the mount (u): it was a place very fruitful for wheat; hence that saying of Jannes and Jambres, the magicians of Egypt, to Moses (x); "Do you bring straw to Ephraim?" Which was a proverbial expression, the same with ours of carrying coals to Newcastle: they seeing Moses do signs and wonders, supposed he did them by enchantment; and the sense of their proverb is, Do you bring enchantments into Egypt, where there are so many already? This Ephraim the Jews say (y), is the same with that in 2 Chron. xiii. 19. and as there Bethel is mentioned with it, it seems to have been in the tribe of Benjamin: and it may be observed, that Josephus (z) speaks of

(r) Misn. Menachot, c. 8. §. 1.

(u) Bartenora in ib.

(x) T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 85. 1. Gloss. in ib. Taeror Hamor, fol. 170. 2. Bereshit Rabba, §. 26. fol. 75. 4.

(y) Yom. Tob. in Misn. Menachot, c. 8. §. 1. & Gloss. in T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 83. 2.

(z) De Belle Jud. l. 4. c. 9. §. 9.

(s) Abarbanel in Lev. xix. 3, 4.

of an Ephraim, along with Bethel likewise; so, that they all seem to mean the same place; and according to the same writer, it was but a little city, and it may be an obscure one, for which reason Christ withdrew to it. Epiphanius (a) makes mention of the wilderness of Bethel and Ephraim, through which he travelled, accompanied by a Jew, as he came up from Jericho to the hill-country; and is very likely the same wilderness which is here spoken of; and by some called *Quarentana*, and placed by the river Chereth, in the tribe of Benjamin, north-east of Jerusalem; and the same writer elsewhere calls (b) Ephraim, the city of the wilderness; according to Jerom (c), it was twenty miles from Ælia, or Jerusalem; though according to Eusebius, it was but eight miles, which is thought to be the truest account; and by them both is said to be a very large village; and in which they may not differ from Josephus; for it might be a large village, and yet a little city. Jerom (d) takes notice of a place called Aphra, in the tribe of Benjamin, which he says at that time was called the village Effrem, and was five miles from Bethel eastward; and of another called Aphraim, a city in the tribe of Issachar, which in his time went by the name of the village Afarea, six miles from the legion, northward; the former agrees best with this Ephraim.

And there continued with his disciples] Spending his time in private conversation with them, teaching and instructing them in things concerning the kingdom of God, his time with them being now but short.

55 ¶ And the Jews passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.

And the Jews passover was nigh at hand] Which was the fourth passover from Christ's entrance on his public ministry, and the last he eat with his disciples; when he, by being sacrificed for his people, put an end to that, and all other ceremonial observances:

And many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover] Not only from the country where Ephraim was, but from all other countries in Judea and Galilee: all the males were obliged to go up to Jerusalem at the time of the passover, where it was only kept; but many went before that time, for the reason following:

To purify themselves] We read in 2 Chron. xxx. 18. of many that had not cleansed themselves, and yet

eat the passover; for whom Hezekiah prayed, that they might be pardoned, which shews that they had done amiss: upon which place, Jarchi has this observation; that "Judah (the men of Judah) were all clean, because they were near to Jerusalem, and could purify and sanctify themselves, and return to Jerusalem; but many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and Issachar, and Zabulon, could not do so." And this seems to be the case of these people, they were country people, that lived at a distance, and not having purified themselves from several uncleannesses, came up before the time, that they might cleanse themselves, and be ready at the time: in several cases purification was required; as in women after lying-in, menstruous and profluvius persons, and such that had touched a dead body, or any creeping thing, and in other cases; and which by reason of distance, might be neglected; wherefore it was necessary they should come up before the time of the passover, to fit themselves for it: the rule about defiled persons eating the passover, is this (e); "If the congregation is polluted, or the greatest part of it, or the priests are unclean, and the congregation pure, it is kept in uncleanness; but if the lesser part of the congregation is defiled, the pure keep the first passover, and the unclean the second." This, their commentators say (f), is to be understood of uncleanness by touching the dead, which required seven days of purification; and it is very probable that this was the case of these persons, since it was about so many days before the passover, that they came up; see chapter xii. 1. The account Maimonides (g) gives of this matter, is this; "Who is a defiled person, that is put off to the second passover? Every one who cannot eat the passover on the night of the fifteenth of Nisan, because of his uncleanness; as profluvius men, and women, menstruous and lying-in women, and the husbands of menstruous women; but he that toucheth the dead carcass of a beast, or a creeping thing, and the like, on the fourteenth, lo, he dips, and they slay for him (the passover) after he has dipped; and in the evening, when his sun is set, he eats the passover; he that is defiled by touching the dead, whose seventh day happens to be on the fourteenth, though he dips and is sprinkled on, and lo, he is fit to eat the holy things at evening, yet they do not kill for him, but he is put off to the second passover; as it is said, Numb. ix. 6. And there were certain men who were defiled by the dead body

(a) Adv. Hæref. l. 1. tom. 2. Hæref. 30.

(b) Ib. Hæref. 29.

(c) De locis Hebraicis, fol. 91. A.

(d) Ibid. fol. 88. H. I.

(e) Misn. Pesachim, c. 7. §. 6. Vid. Maimon. Korban Pesach, c. 7. §. 1—6. & Biah Hamikdash, c. 4. §. 10—18.

(f) Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. ibid.

(g) Hilchot: Korban Pesach, c. 6. §. 1, 2, 3.

"body of a man, that they could not keep the passover on that day; by tradition it is learned, that it was their seventh day, &c." These, with many other cases there instanced in, may serve to illustrate this passage.

56 Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?

Then sought they for Jesus] That is, the country people; some on one account, and some on another; some out of curiosity to see his person, others to see his miracles, and others to hear his doctrine; and some, it may be, to take him, and deliver him up to the sanhedrim, who had issued out a proclamation to that purpose, and doubtless offered a reward:

And spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple] Whither they came to purify themselves, according to the law of the sanctuary:

What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?] It was a matter of dispute with them, whether Christ would come or no, to the feast; some might be of opinion that he would not, at least they very much questioned it, since the sanhedrim had published such an order for the discovery of him; and since upon it he was gone from Bethany, further into the country; though others might be differently minded, and believe he would come, since all the males of Israel were obliged to appear at that feast, and it was his duty; and they could not persuade themselves that he would neglect his duty for fear of the Jews.

57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him.

Now both the chief priests and Pharisees] Who were of the sanhedrim:

Had given a commandment] Or published an edict, a decree of the senate:

That if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him] And this made it a doubtful point with some whether he would come to the feast, or no; and was the reason why others sought for him, and inquired after him, that they might discover him to the chief priests and Pharisees, and have the promised reward.

CHAP. XII.

In this chapter is related the anointing of Christ's feet by Mary, at the supper in Bethany, *ch. 1—3.* wherefore Judas reprehended her, *ch. 4—6.* and

Christ defendeth it, *ch. 7.* 8. many Jews go to see Lazarus, *ch. 9.* whom the chief priests seek to put to death, *ch. 10.* 11. Christ rideth to Jerusalem, whom the multitude receive with joy, *ch. 12—19.* Some Greeks desire to see Christ, who discourse with Philip thereabout, *ch. 20—22.* Christ is glorified with a voice from heaven, *ch. 23—29.* He telleth the multitude the fruit and manner of his death: exhorteth them to walk in his light, *ch. 30—36.* many of the Jews believe in him, *ch. 37—45.* Christ exhorteth them to faith, *ch. 46—50.*

THEN Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

Then Jesus six days before the passover] Or "before the six days of the passover;" not as designing the days of that feast, for they were seven; but as reckoning so many days back from it, that is, before the sixth day from the ensuing passover: if there were six complete days between this and the passover, as this way of speaking seems to imply; then this must be the day before the Jewish sabbath, and this is more likely, than that Christ should travel on the sabbath-day: but if this was the sixth day before it, it was their sabbath-day, and so at the going out of it in the evening, a supper was made for him, which with the Jews, on that night, was a plentiful one; for they remembered the sabbath in its going out, as well as in its coming in (a), and this was to prevent grief at the going out of it: so some days before the passover, the lamb was separated from the flock, and kept up till the fourteenth day, *Exod. xii. 3, 6.* particularly it may be observed, that seven days before the day of atonement, the high priest was separated from his own house, and had to the chamber *palhedrin* (b); and much such a space of time there was, between the day of the great atonement by Christ, and his unction by Mary; which is said to be against the day of his burial, which being the same day with his sufferings, was the great day of atonement; at this time Jesus

Came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead] The last clause is left out in the Syriac, Persian, and Ethiopic versions:

Whom he raised from the dead] That is, Jesus, as the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions express; and the Ethiopic version adds, "in Bethany." This was the town of Lazarus; here he lived, and here he died, and here he was raised from the dead; and here he continued

(a) Maimon. *Hilchot Sabbar*, c. 29. §. 1. 11, 12, 29.

(b) *Mishn. Yoma*, c. 1. §. 1.

tinued and dwelt, after his resurrection; and hither Christ came to see him, and the rest of the family, though he knew he exposed himself to danger in so doing.

2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

There they made him a supper] At Bethany, in the house of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary; by whose order, and at whose charge it was prepared for him; and not in the house of Simon the leper, which was four days after this, *Matt.* xxvi. 2, 6.

And Martha served] Who was always a busy, active, and stirring woman; and this she did, to testify her love to Christ, and great respect for him; otherwise, as she was a person of substance, she had servants enough to wait at table:

But Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him] And eat and drank, and conversed; by which it appeared, that he was really risen from the dead, and was in a good state of health.

3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard very costly] Worth three hundred pence, according to Judas's estimation of it. This Mary, was the other sister of Lazarus; see the notes on *Matt.* xxvi. 7. and *Mark* xiv. 3. concerning the nature and value of this ointment:

And anointed the feet of Jesus] As he lay upon the bed or couch, at supper:

And wiped his feet with her hair] See the note on *Luke* vii. 38.

And the house was filled with the odour of the ointment] See *Cant.* i. 3, 12. Ointment of spikenard was very odoriferous: this may be an emblem of the sweet savour of Christ, in the ministration of the Gospel throughout the whole world.

4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

Then saith one of his disciples] Who had no true love for his master, was an hypocrite, and a covetous person:

Judas Iscariot] So called, to distinguish him from another Judas, an apostle: see the note on *Matt.* x. 4.

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Simon's son] This is omitted in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persian, and Ethiopic versions; see the note on chapter xiii. 2.

Which should betray him] And so he did; this was predetermined by God, foretold in prophecy, and foreknown by Christ; and is observed here, to shew the temper and character of the man.

5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence] Meaning Roman pence, one of which is of the value of our money seven pence halfpenny; so that three hundred pence amount to nine pounds seven shillings and six-pence:

And given to the poor?] This was his pretence, and with which he covered himself; his uneasiness was, because it was not sold, and the money put into his hands, as appears by what follows.

6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

This he said, not that he cared for the poor] He had no affection for them, and was unconcerned about them, and took no care of them to feed and clothe them; he was no ways solicitous for their support, refreshment, and more comfortable living:

But because he was a thief] To his master, and purloined the money he was intrusted with by him, and put it to his own use:

And had the bag, and bare what was put therein] The word rendered a bag, is adopted by the Rabbinical Jews into their language; and is sometimes read *gloskema*, and at other times *dloskema*, and is used by them for different things; sometimes (*c*) for a bier, or coffin, in which the dead was buried, which sense can have no place here; sometimes for a chest, or coffer (*d*); and so the Septuagint use the Greek word in *2 Chron.* xxiv. 8, 10, 11. for the chest into which the people put their collection; and it may be so interpreted here, and so Nonnus renders it; it may signify the chest or coffer which Judas had the care of, the keys of which were in his hands, and whatever was to be put into it, he bore or carried thither: and it is also used by the Jewish writers for a purse (*e*); it is asked, "What is *dloskema*? Says Rabbah "bar Samuel, שליקי דסבי "the purse of old men;" or such as ancient men use; and this is the signification of it here: it may be the same with the

Loculi

(c) Targum Jon. & Jerus. in Gen. i. 26. T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 24. 2. & Massech. Samacot. c. 3. §. 2. (d) Mish. Meila, c. 6. §. 1. T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 26. 2. (e) T. Bab. Gitin, fol. 28. 1. & Bava Metzia, fol. 20. 2.

Leculi of the Romans, and so the Vulgate Latin renders it here; which were different from a chest, or coffer, being moveable, and to be carried about, and which were carried by servants, as well as the purse (*f*). Judas had the purse, into which was put whatsoever was ministered to Christ, for the common supply of him and his disciples, and for the relief of the poor.

7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

Then said Jesus, Let her alone] Do not disturb her in what she does, or hinder her, or blame her for it:

Against the day of my burial hath she kept this] This ointment, which she now poured on Christ. It was usual to embalm the dead with ointments and spices: Christ suggests, that the time of his death and burial were nigh, and that this woman had kept this ointment till now, for such a purpose; and whereas she would not be able to make use of it at the time of his interment, she had embalmed his body with it now, before-hand; though without any knowledge of his death, or any such intention and design in her, but the Holy Ghost so directing her: for this is not to be understood of her keeping any part of it till that time, which it does not appear she did.

8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

For the poor always ye have with you] And so would not want opportunities of shewing a regard to them, which Christ always recommended; nor does he here in the least discourage, an ingenious and affectionate concern for them: the words seem to be a sort of prophecy, that there would be always poor persons in the churches of Christ, to be taken care of and provided for; see the note on *Matt. xxvi. 11.* and yet the Jews suppose cases, in which the collectors of alms may have no poor to distribute to, and direct what they shall do in such cases (*g*):

But me ye have not always] Meaning, with respect to his corporal presence, which would be quickly withdrawn from them, when there would be no more an opportunity of shewing him personal respect, in such a way.

9 ¶ Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there] That is, many of the Jews that dwelt at Jerusalem, knew that Jesus was at Bethany; for it being but two miles from Jerusalem, the report of his being come soon reached thither:

And they came from Jerusalem to Bethany, not for Jesus' sake only] To see him, and hear him, and observe what he said and did:

But that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead] That is, whom Jesus had raised from the dead, as the Alexandrian copy, and the Ethiopic version express it; for it equally excited their curiosity, to see the person that had been dead, and was raised from the dead, as to see him who raised him: and it is very likely before they had no opportunity of seeing him; it may be he did not appear publicly before, but kept himself retired; but now Jesus being come, he shewed himself openly; which the Jerusalem Jews being informed of, induced them to come to see both the one and the other.

10 But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;

But the chief priests] With the rest of the sanhedrim,

Consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death] As well as Jesus, and that for no other crime, but because he was raised from the dead by him; which shews, what consciences these men had, and how horribly wicked they were; that they stuck at nothing whereby they might satisfy their malice and envy, and secure their worldly interests and advantages.

11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

Because that by reason of him] Of the miracle which was wrought upon him, in raising him from the dead, of which he was a living and an abiding witness,

Many of the Jews went away] Not from Jerusalem only, but from the chief priests and Pharisees, and the rest of the Jews, that combined against Christ; they withdrew themselves from their party, and deserted them:

And believed on Jesus] As the Messiah; so that they found their interest was decreasing and weakening every day, and that those on the side of Christ were increasing; and this they could not bear, and therefore consulted to take away the life of Lazarus, as well as that of Jesus; who they imagined, as long as he lived, would be a means of inducing persons to believe in Jesus as the Messiah;

(f) Vid. Pignorius de Servis, p. 327, 328.

(g) T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 13. 1. & Bava Metzia, fol. 38. 1. & Bava Bathra, fol. 8. 2.

Messiah; whereas if he was dead, the fact would be forgotten, or he more easily denied.

12 ¶ On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

On the next day much people that were come to the feast] Of the passover; and they were much people indeed that came yearly to this feast, from all parts of the nation; for all the males in Israel were obliged to appear at this time; and though the women were not obliged, yet multitudes of them came, and the fame of Jesus might bring the more; add to which, that there was now a general expectation of the Messiah's coming, which brought the Jews from all parts of the world to Jerusalem; so that this might be called indeed, מן המון רב "a crowded passover:" and though the following account is a stretching it too far, yet it may serve to illustrate this matter: "King Agrippa sought to know what was the number of the multitude which were in Jerusalem; he said to the priests, lay by for me one kidney of every passover lamb; they laid by for him six hundred thousand pair of kidneys, double the number of those that came out of Egypt; and there is never a passover-lamb, but there are more than ten numbered for it (b), &c." Now the day following the supper at Bethany, and which seems to be the first day of the week, this multitude of people,

When they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem] From Bethany, which was soon known, it being so near,

13 Took branches of palm-trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Took branches of palm-trees] The Ethiopic version adds, "and young shoots from Jerusalem;" these grew in great plenty on one part of the mount of Olives, that next to Bethany, from whence that town had its name; for it signifies "the house of dates," the fruit of the palm-tree; see the note on Matt. xxi. 17. And as that tree was a sign of joy and victory, they carried branches of it in their hands, as they met the king Messiah, who was about to make his public entrance into Jerusalem, in triumph; and where by his sufferings and death he should gain the victory over sin, Satan, the world, and death; and lay a solid foundation for joy and peace, to all that believe in him: the Jews say (i), "If a man takes, בן

(b) Echa Rabbati, fol. 42. 3, 4.
S. 30. fol. 170. 3.

(i) Vajikra Rabba,

"(the very Greek word here used) palm-tree branches in his hands, we know that he is victorious." The Perfic version reads, "branches of olives."

And went forth to meet him, and cried] When they came up to him, and as he passed by them,

Hosanna: Blessed is the king of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord] See the note on Matt. xxi. 9.

14 And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written,

And Jesus, when he had found a young ass] Which he sent his disciples for to a neighbouring village, and they brought to him:

Sat thereon; as it is written] In Zech. ix. 9. though some part of the words seems to be taken out of Isaiah lxii. 11. see the note on Matt. xxi. 5. and so Nonnus paraphrases it here, "that it might be fulfilled which Elaias said."

15 Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.

But rejoice; see Zech. ix. 9. and the note on Matt. xxi. 5.

16 These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.

These things understood not his disciples at the first] Or "at that time," as the Syriac and Perfic versions render it; or "on that day," as the Ethiopic version; they did not then know the sense of that prophecy, nor that the things which were now doing, were a fulfilling of it:

But when Jesus was glorified] Was raised from the dead, and ascended to heaven, and was set down at the right hand of God, crowned with glory and honour; and when having received the promise of the Father, the Holy Ghost, and his gifts, he poured them forth in a very plenteous and extraordinary manner upon them; whereby their minds were greatly illuminated, and they had a very distinct knowledge of the scriptures of the Old Testament; and saw clearly, how they severally had their accomplishment in Christ:

Then remembered they that these things were written of him] In the prophecies of the Old Testament:

And that they had done these things unto him] Both the disciples and the multitude, or that these things were done to him; such as bringing the ass to him, laying their cloaths on it, and setting him upon it,

it, attending him with shoutings and hosannas to the city of Jerusalem, &c.

17 The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.

The people therefore that was with him] The Jews, that came from Jerusalem to Bethany, to comfort the two sisters of Lazarus upon his death, who believed in Christ; and others of the town of Bethany, who with them were along with Christ,

When he called Lazarus out of his grave] Saying, Lazarus, Come forth:

And raised him from the dead] To life:

Bare record] To the Jews at Jerusalem, and to the people that came out of the several countries, of the truth of that fact; declaring, that they were eye and ear-witnesses of the whole, and that it was a truth that might be depended on.

18 For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.

For this cause the people also met him] This was a principal reason, among others, which induced them to set out in the manner they did, with palm-tree branches in their hands, and accost him as the king of Israel, when they met him and hosanna'd him into the city:

For that they heard that he had done this miracle] The witnesses were so many, and the proofs they gave so strong, that they firmly believed it: and this being a most amazing miracle, and which exceeded even any of the same kind; Jairus's daughter was but just dead, and the widow of Naim's son was not buried, when they were raised, but Lazarus had been dead and buried four days; it made a very strong impression upon the minds of the people, and engaged their attention to him, and belief in him.

19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

The Pharisees therefore said among themselves] Either when assembled in their own private houses, or in the sanhedrim; or as they stood together in the streets, seeing Jesus pass by in such pomp, and such a multitude with him:

Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing?] The Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions read, "we prevail nothing," so Nonnus; the sense is the same; suggesting, that all their wise schemes and crafty

counsels, signified nothing; the commands they enjoined the people not to follow him, or to apprehend him, or to shew them where he was, were disregarded; their threatenings to put out of the synagogue such as should confess him, were taken no notice of; their promises of reward were slighted; their examples were not followed; and all their artifice and cunning, backed with power and authority, did not succeed:

Behold, the world is gone after him] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, "the whole world," and so Nonnus; the Persian version, "all the people;" that is, a very great number of people; for they could not mean, that all the inhabitants of the world, or every individual of mankind were followers of him, and became his disciples, nor even all in their own land; they themselves, with multitudes more of the same complexion, were an exception to this: but they speak in the common dialect of that nation; of which take two or three instances. "It happened to a certain high priest, that he went out of the sanctuary, כולי עלמא בחריד, and the whole world went after him;" and "when they saw Shemaiah and Abtalion, they left him, and went after them (k)." And again (l), "R. Aba proclaimed, Whoever seeks riches, and whoever seeks the way of life in the world to come, let him come and study in the law; and כולי עלמא "the whole world" will gather together to him." Once more (m), "Jonathan said to David, 1 Sam. xxiii. 17. Thou shalt be king over Israel, and I will be next to thee. What is the meaning of this? Perhaps Jonathan the son of Saul saw, כולי עלמא "the world draw after David." This shews the sense of those phrases, "the world, and the whole world," when used in the article of redemption by Jesus Christ; see the note on 1 John ii. 2.

20 And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast:

And there were certain Greeks] Hellenes; so called, from Hellen a king of that name, as Pliny says (n). These were not Græcizing Jews, or Jews that dwelt in Greece, and spoke the Greek language; for they were called not *Hellenes*, but *Hellenists*; but these were, as the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions render it, "Gentiles;" and were either mere Gentiles, and yet devout and religious men, who were allowed to offer sacrifice, and to worship in the court of the Gentiles; or they were proselytes, either of *righteousness*, and

(k) T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 71. 2.

fol. 60. 4.

(l) Zohar in Gen. fol. 85. 1.

(m) T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 85. 1.

(n) Nat. Hist. l. 4. c. 7.

so were circumcised, and had a right to eat of the passover, as well as to worship at it; or of the gate, and so being uncircumcised, might not eat of the passover, yet might worship at it; which latter seems to be the case, by what follows: for these were

Among them that came up to worship at the feast Of the passover, which was near at hand: these were among those that went forth to meet Jesus, and that attended him to Jerusalem, who were come up out of the country to this feast; and these came along with them to worship at it, to offer their sacrifices, and join in prayer, though they might not eat of the passover.

21 The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

The same came therefore to Philip Who might know him; they might have been some of his neighbours formerly, for that Philip's parents, though Jews, dwelt among Greeks, seems probable, from the name given to him, which is a Greek one; some have thought, that these Greeks were Syrophenicians, who dwelt upon the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and were not far off from Galilee, and from Bethsaida, the native place of Philip, and is therefore mentioned as follows:

Which was of Bethsaida of Galilee As in *John i. 44.* see the note there. This place may be interpreted the house of hunting, or of fishing; for it is not easy to say, which it has its name from, since, צידה "saïda," signifies both hunting and fishing; and seeing it was in or near the tribe of Nephtali, where was plenty of deer, and a wilderness was near it, where might be wild beasts, it might be so called from hunting, and as it was situated near the lake of Genesaret, it might have its name from the fishing-trade used in it; for Peter and Andrew, who were of it, were both fishermen: but it is yet more difficult to determine, whether this is the same with, or different from the Bethsaida Josephus (o) speaks of, as rebuilt by Philip, and called by him *Julias*, after the name of Cæsar's daughter, as I have observed in the notes on *Luke ix. 10.* and *John i. 44.* since this was in Galilee, of which Herod Antipas was tetrarch, and where Philip could have no power to rebuild places, and change their names; and besides the city, which he repaired, and called *Julias*, according to Josephus (p), was in lower Gaulonitis, and therefore must be different, unless that, or any part of it, can be thought to be the

same with Galilee; wherefore the learned Reland (q) thinks, that there were two Bethsaidas, and which seems very probable; and it is likely, that this is here purposely called Bethsaida of Galilee, distinguish it from the other, which, by some persons, might still be called Bethsaida, though it had got a new name. Moreover, this Bethsaida is mentioned in other places along with Capernaum and Chorazin, *Matt. xi. 21, 23.* which were in Galilee. And Epiphanius says (r), that Bethsaida and Capernaum were not far distant one from another; and according to Jerom (s), Chorazin was but two miles from Capernaum; and who elsewhere says (t), that Capernaum, Tiberias, Bethsaida, and Chorazin, were situated on the shore of the lake of Genesaret. It is said to be fifty-six miles from Jerusalem:

And desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus That is, they intreated him, that he would introduce them into the company of Jesus; they wanted to be admitted into his presence, to have some discourse and conversation with him; and what might make them the more desirous of it, was the miracle he had lately wrought in raising Lazarus from the dead; as also the uncommon manner of his entering into Jerusalem, which they saw; and which shews, that it was not a bare sight of his person they meant, but the enjoyment of his company for a while; and this favour they ask of Philip, with great respect to him, and in a very polite way, and yet with great sincerity, and strong affection, and earnest importunity; and was a pledge and presage of the future conversion of the Gentiles, when the Jews would be rejected. And it may be observed, that sensible sinners are very desirous of having a spiritual sight of Christ, of the glories of his person, and the fulness of his grace, and to see their interest in him, and to have communion and fellowship with him: he is all in all to them; no object so delightful and satisfying to them as he is; and they never see him, but they receive something from him, and are made more like unto him.

22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

Philip cometh and telleth Andrew The request the Greeks made to him, and this he did, that he might have his advice in this matter; and that not only because he might be a senior man as well as apostle, but because he was of the same town, and might know these men as well as Philip:

And

(o) Antiq. l. 18. c. 2. §. 1. Ed. Hudson.
Jud. l. 2. c. 9. §. 1.

(p) De Bello

(q) Palestina Illustrata, l. 3. p. 654, 655.
Hæres. l. 2. Hæres. 51.
fol. 90. 6.

(r) Contra
De locis Hebraicis,
(s) Comment. in Ezechiel, c. 9. 2.

And again, Andrew and Philip told Jesus] After they had consulted together, whether it was proper or no to move this thing to their master, since he had forbid them going in the way of the Gentiles, they agreed to acquaint him with it, that he might do his pleasure.

23 ¶ And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

And Jesus answered them] Not directly and particularly; he did not in plain terms signify what was his will, whether these Greeks should be admitted or no; and yet expressed himself in such a manner as shews he was not averse to it, but was pleased with it, and takes notice of it, as an evidence of the near approach of his glorification:

Saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified] By rising from the dead, ascending to heaven, sitting at the right hand of God, and from thence pouring forth the Spirit upon his disciples, who should go and preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, as well as Jews; and which would issue in the conversion of many of them, and so in his glory, of which the coming of these Greeks was an earnest. But he intimates in the next verse, that he must first die.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

Verily, verily, I say unto you] This is a certain truth in nature, Christ was about to assert; and what he signifies by it would be a certain fact, and which he mentions that his death might not be a stumblingblock to his disciples, or any objection to his glorification; but was rather to be considered as a means of it, and necessary in order to it:

Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground] Or is sown in the earth; for sowing with the Jews is expressed by the falling of the seed into the earth; see the note on *Matt. xiii. 4.* and is a very fit phrase to set forth the death of Christ by, who fell a sacrifice to justice by the hands of men:

And die] Or is corrupted, and putrefies; and which is done in three days time in moist land, [but is longer in dry ground ere it perishes (u): and a corn of wheat is almost the only seed, that being cast into the earth, does die; and therefore is very aptly used by Christ:

It abideth alone] A mere single corn as it is:

But if it die] If it wastes, consumes, and rots, as it does, being cast into the earth, in the time beforementioned,

It bringeth forth much fruit] It shoots out, and rises above ground, and appears in blade, and stalk, and ear, and produces many corns or grains of wheat; all which our Lord intends should be accommodated to himself, and to his death, and the fruits of it. He compares himself to a corn of wheat; to wheat, for the choiceness and excellency of it above all other grain, he being the chiefest among ten thousand, angels or men; and for the purity and cleanness of it, he being even in his human nature pure, and free from sin; and for its fruitfulness, he being fruitful in himself, and the cause of all fruitfulness in his people; and for its usefulness for food, he being the bread of life, and the finest of the wheat: and whereas the wheat must be threshed, and ground, and sifted, and kneaded, and baked, before it is fit for food; all this may express the sufferings and death of Christ, in order to be proper food for the faith of his people: and Christ here compares himself to a single corn of wheat, because he was of little account among men, and but little or nothing was expected by them from him; and chiefly because he was alone in the salvation of his people. The death of Christ is signified by the falling of the corn of wheat into the ground, and dying, and shews that Christ's death was not accidental, but designed; it was determined in the counsels and purposes of God, and intended for his glory and the redemption of men; even as wheat falls out of the hands of the sower, not casually, but on purpose, that it may die and spring up again, and produce an increase: and also, that the death of Christ was voluntary, both on his Father's part, and on his own; and was real, and not in appearance only, and yet was but for a short time. As the corn of wheat that dies, soon revives again, and is quickly above ground, so Christ, though he really died, did not long continue under the power of death, but rose again the third day, and now lives for ever. Moreover, Christ intimates by this simile, that if he had not died, he should have been alone; not without his Father, and the blessed Spirit; nor without the holy and elect angels; but without any of the sons of men, who all fell and died in Adam: and had not Christ died, none of them would have lived; none of them could have been justified; nor could their sins have been expiated; nor would any of them have been regenerated: Christ must have been without them in heaven; wherefore he chose rather to die for them, that they might be for ever with him, than be alone in the human nature. And he further

(u) Rabbenu Samson & Bartenora in *Mishn. Celaim*, c. 2, §. 3.

her observes hereby, that his death would be productive of much fruit; which may be understood both of a large harvest of souls, that should be saved, among Jews and Gentiles, and especially the latter; and of the blessings of grace, as redemption, justification, peace, pardon and eternal life, that should follow upon it.

25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

He that loveth his life shall lose it] The sense is, that whoever is so in love with this present temporal life, as to be anxiously careful of it, and takes all precautions to secure it; and rather than to expose it to any danger, chooses to deny the faith of Christ, and desert his cause and interest; as such an one shall not long enjoy this life, so he shall come short of an eternal one:

And he that hateth his life in this world] On the other hand, whoever seems careless about it, and not to consult the safety of it, but is unconcerned about it; yea, as if he was throwing it away, as of no great moment and significance, rather than do any thing to preserve it, which would be scandalous to himself, and be dishonourable to his Lord and Master; he

shall keep it unto life eternal] He shall be preserved in his temporal life, in a remarkable manner, until he has done the will and work of God, notwithstanding all attempts upon it; and he shall appear to have that spiritual life, which is the beginning and pledge of, and which springs up unto, and issues in eternal life; and that he shall enjoy in the world to come. This Christ said to let his disciples and followers know, that they must suffer and die, as well as he, though not on the same account, and for the self-same reasons; and that their sufferings and death in his cause, and for his Gospel, would turn to their advantage.

26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

If any man serve me] Or is willing to be a servant of Christ, and to be esteemed as such:

Let him follow me] As in the exercise of the graces of love, humility, patience, self-denial, and resignation of his will to the will of God, and in the discharge of every duty, walking as he walked, so in a way of suffering; for as the master, so the servants, as the head, so the members, through many tribulations must enter the kingdom; to which he encourages by the following things:

And where I am] In heaven, as he now was, as the Son of God; or "where I shall be," as the Syriac and Persic versions render it, even as man, in the human nature, when raised from the dead:

There shall also my servant be] When he has done his work, and the place is prepared for him, and he for that, and where he shall ever abide; and as a further encouragement, he adds,

If any man serve me, him will my father honour] By accepting his service, affording him his gracious presence here, and by giving him eternal glory hereafter, to which he has called him.

27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

Now is my soul troubled] At the hardness and unbelief of the Jews, and the rejection of them, when the Gentiles would be called, and converted, by which he would be glorified; and at the conduct and carriage of his disciples to him, he had a foreknowledge of; at the betraying of him by one, and the denial of him by another, and the flight of them all from him; and at the devil, and the furious and violent attack he knew he would make upon him, though he had obliged him to leave him when he assaulted him before, and knew he could find nothing in him now, and that as God he was able to destroy him; but this was to be done by him, as man, and by dying too: he was in his human soul troubled at the thoughts of his death, though it was his Father's will, and he had agreed to it, and was for the salvation of his people, his heart was so much set upon; yet it was terrible to the human nature, and especially as attended with the wrath of God; at the apprehensions of which, his soul was exceedingly troubled; not as about to fall on him on his own personal account, but as being the surety of his people, and as having their sins upon him to satisfy angry and injured justice for:

And what shall I say?] This question he puts, as being in the utmost distress and difficulty, as if he knew not what to say; and yet not as advising with his disciples, what was to be said or done in his case; but is rather used to introduce another question, as the following words may be formed: shall I say,

Father, save me from this hour?] As requesting his Father, that he might be strengthened under his sufferings and death; and carried through them, and out of them; or rather as deprecating them, desiring the cup might pass from him, as he afterwards did; and then the sense is, Shall I put up such a petition to my Father, to save me from sorrows, sufferings, and death? No, I will not: the human

human nature through frailty might prompt him to it, and he be just going to do it, when he corrects himself, saying;

But for this cause came I unto this hour] This hour or time of sorrow and suffering was appointed for him; it was fixed in the covenant of grace, and Christ had agreed to it; he was sent into this world, and he came into it, on account of this hour; and was preserved hitherto for this purpose; and was now come to Jerusalem, and was there at this instant, for that very reason, namely, to suffer and die. And since this was the case, he would not put up such a petition to his Father, but the following one.

28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, *saying*, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

Father, glorify thy name] The perfections of his nature, particularly his justice and holiness, meaning in himself, by his sufferings and death; intimating hereby, that his Father's glory was what he had in view, and that the securing of that would give him an infinite pleasure amidst all his sorrow. The Arabic version, and Nonnus, read *glorify thy Son*, as in chapter xvii. 1. and the Ethiopic version takes in both, "glorify thy name, and thy Son;" and indeed, what glorifies the one, glorifies the other; see chapter xiii. 31, 32.

Then came there a voice from heaven] As at his baptism and transfiguration, and which came from the Father, and was an articulate one, and what the Jews call *Bath Kol*, or "the daughter of the voice;" saying,

I have both glorified it] Meaning in the incarnation; ministry; obedience and miracles of Christ; and particularly in that late one in raising Lazarus from the dead:

And will glorify it again] By supporting him under, and carrying him through his sufferings and death, and by raising him from the dead, and setting him at his own right hand.

29 The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.

The people therefore that stood by and heard it] Some more confusedly, who were farthest off; others more distinctly, who were nearer: the first of these,

Said that it thundered] As it used to do when *Bath Kol* was heard, which as the Jews say (x), "Is a voice that comes out of heaven proceeding from the midst of another voice," as thunder;

wherefore some took this for thunder, and others for the voice of an angel out of the thunder:

Others said, An angel spake to him] These being nearer, perceived it was an articulate voice, which expressed certain distinct words, which they thought were delivered by an angel; for the Jews had a mighty notion of the discourse and conversation of angels with men, which their doctors pretended to understand; particularly R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, a Rabbi, who was living at this time, had learned their speech, and was well versed in it (y).

30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

Jesus answered and said] To the people that stood by, and were disputing among themselves about what they heard, whether it was thunder, or the voice of an angel:

This voice came not because of me] At least not only and chiefly; it was not so much in answer to his prayer, or in order to comfort him under the apprehensions he had of his sufferings and death, or to assure him of his future glorification, though all this was true:

But for your sakes] To convince them that he was the Messiah, and engage them to believe in him, or to leave them without excuse; since not only miracles were wrought before their eyes, but with their ears they heard God speaking to him, and which is the rule that they themselves prescribe; for according to them, no man is to be hearkened to, though he should do as many signs and wonders as Moses, the son of Amram, unless they hear with their ears, that the Lord speaks to him as he did to Moses (z).

31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

Now is the judgment of this world] That is, in a very short time will be the judgment either of the Jewish world, when that shall be reprov'd, convinced and condemned for their sin of rejecting Christ, and crucifying him, by the Spirit, in the ministration of the Gospel; and they still continuing in their impenitence and unbelief, in process of time wrath will come upon them, upon their nation, city, and temple, to the uttermost; or of the Gentile world, when there shall be a discrimination, and separation made in it, of the chosen of God, who shall be called by special grace, and with the converted and believing Jews, shall form a Gospel-church-state, separate from the world of the ungodly; or of the world of God's elect

(x) Like Tosephot in T. Bab. Sanhedrim. art. 30.

(y) T. Bab. Succa, fol. 28. 1. & Bava Bathra, fol. 134. 1.

(z) R. Mosi Kottensis prefat. ad Mitavet Tora, pr. Affirm.

elect among Jews and Gentiles; whose cause, being undertook by Christ, he will now vindicate it, and redeem them from sin and Satan, who have usurped a power and dominion over them: hence it follows,

Now shall the prince of this world be cast out] The phrase, *שר העולם* "the prince of the world," is much used by Jewish writers (a), by whom an angel is meant; and they seem to design the angel of death, which is the devil: and it is certain, that he is here intended, and is so called, not because he has any legal power and authority over the world; but because he has usurped a dominion over it, and has great power and efficacy in the hearts of the children of disobedience, who yield a voluntary subjection to him, as if he was their proper lord and sovereign: now the time was at hand, when he should be cast out of the empire of the world he had assumed, and out of the temples of the Gentiles, and out of the hearts of God's elect among them.

32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth] The death of Christ is here signified by his being *lifted up from the earth*, in allusion to the lifting up of the brazen serpent on the pole; and shews, that his death would not be natural, but violent, and would be public, and not private; and fitly expresses his mediation between God and men, being lifted up between the heavens and the earth; and points out the death of the cross, as is intimated in the next verse: and the *if* here does not suppose that his death, and the manner of it, were uncertain, for it was determined by God, agreed to by himself, predicted in the scriptures, signified by types, and foretold by himself, and was necessary for the salvation of his people; but it designs the time of his drawing persons to himself, which is afterwards expressed, and may be rendered, "when I am lifted up," as it is by the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions: now when this will be, Christ says,

I will draw all men unto me] Which is not to be understood of the concourse of people about him, when on the cross, some for him, others against him, some to bewail him, and others to reproach him; but rather, of the gathering of the elect to him, and in him, as their head and representative, when he was crucified for them; or of the collection of them, through the ministry of the apostles, and of their being brought to believe on him for eternal life and salvation: and this drawing of them to him, in consequence of his death, sup-

poses distance from him, want of power and will to come to him, and the efficacious grace of God to bring them, though without any force and compulsion; and this is to be understood not of every individual of human nature; for all are not drawn to Christ, or enabled to come to him, and believe in him. There were many of the Jews who would not, and did not come to him for life; and who, instead of being drawn to him in this sense, when lifted up on the cross, vilified and reproached him; moreover, in the preceding verse, a *world* is spoken of, whose judgment, or condemnation, was now come: and besides, there was at this time a multitude of souls in hell, who could not, nor never will be, drawn to Christ; and a greater number still there will be at the last day, who, instead of drawing to him in this gracious way and manner, will be bid to depart from him, as having been workers of iniquity. Christ died indeed for all men who are drawn unto him; but this is not true of all men, that are, were, or shall be in the world.

Add to this, that the word *men* is not in the text, it is only *πάντα*, *all*: Beza's most ancient copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read *παντα*, "all things;" and by *all* are meant, all the elect of God, all the children of God, that were scattered abroad; the Persic version reads, "I will draw my friends to me;" it designs some of all sorts of men, of every state, condition, age, sex, and nation, Gentiles as well as Jews, and especially the former; which agrees with the ancient prophecy, *Gen. xlix. 10.* and with the context, and the occasion of the words, which was the desire of the Greeks, that were come to the feast, to see Jesus; and which was a specimen of the large numbers of them, that should be drawn to Christ, through the preaching of the Gospel, after his death. The Jews say, "That in the time to come, or in the days of the Messiah, all the proselytes shall be, *נורא* "drawn," shall freely become proselytes (b)." The allusion here, is to the setting up of a standard or ensign, to gather persons together. Christ's cross is the standard, his love is the banner, and he himself is the ensign, which draw souls to himself, and engage them to enlist themselves under him, and become his volunteers in the day of his power; see *Isaiah xi. 10.*

33 This he said, signifying what death he should die.

This he said] These are the words of the Evangelist, interpreting the design of Christ in the above words, thereby,

Signifying what death he should die] The phrase of being *lifted up from the earth*, not only signified

(a) T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 16. 2. & Sanhedrim, fol. 94. 1. & Cholin, fol. 60. 1.

(b) T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 24. 1. & Gloss. in ibid.

his death, but the kind, or manner of it, that it should be by crucifixion; a person crucified being stretched forth upon a cross, and that erected, was lifted up between earth and heaven.

34 The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

The people answered him] Not the Greeks, but the Jews, and these not such as were friends to Christ, but cavillers at him:

We have heard out of the law] Not the five books of Moses, but the prophets, and hagiographa; even all the books of the Old Testament are called *the law*; see the note on chapter x. 34.

That Christ abideth for ever] Referring to those places which speak of the perpetuity of his priesthood, and the everlasting duration of his kingdom, *Psalms* cx. 4. and xlv. 6. and lxxii. 17. and lxxxix. 36, 37. *Dan.* ii. 44. and chap. vii. 13, 14. in which last text express mention is made of the Son of man, and that and the first may be more especially respected; from whence it appears, that these passages were understood of the Messiah by the ancient Jews: they knew he was designed in *Psalms* cx. 4. He is David's Lord, that was bid to sit at the right hand of Jehovah, after he was raised from the dead, and had ascended on high; whose Gospel went forth with power; and whose people, by it, were made willing to submit to him, to his righteousness, and the scepter of his kingdom; and who also is a priest for ever; and which is appealed to as a proof of the nature, kind, and duration of Christ's priesthood, *Heb.* v. 6. and chapter vii. 17. and so it may be observed it is expressly applied to him by Jewish writers: in *Zech.* iv. 14. it is said, *These are the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth*; of which this interpretation is given (c). "These are Aaron and the Messiah; and it would not be known which of them is (most) beloved, but that he says, *Psalms* cx. 4. *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a priest for ever*; from whence it is manifest that the Messiah is more beloved than Aaron the righteous priest." And so another of them (d) speaking of Melchizedek, says, "This is that which is written *Psalms* cx. 4. *The Lord hath sworn, &c.* Who is this? This is he that is just, and having salvation, the king Messiah, as it is said, *Zach.* ix. 9." So the xlvth Psalm is understood by them of the Messiah; the king, in *Y. 1.* is by Ben Melech, said to be

the king Messiah; *Y. 2.* is thus paraphrased by the Targum, "Thy beauty, O king Messiah, is more excellent than the children of men." And Aben Ezra observes, that this Psalm is either concerning David, or the Messiah his Son, whose name is David, *Ezek.* xxxvii. 25. (e) and the passage in *Psalms* lxxii. 17. is frequently interpreted of the Messiah and his name, and is brought as a proof of the antiquity of it (f); and *Psalms* lxxxix. 36. is also applied to him; and as for *Dan.* vii. 13. that is by many, both ancient and modern Jews, explained of the Messiah (g): and since then they understood these passages of him, it is easy to observe from whence they took this notion that the Messiah should abide for ever. But then they should have observed out of the same law, or holy scriptures, that the Messiah was to be stricken and cut off, was to be brought to the dust of death, and to pour out his soul unto death; all which is consistent with his abiding for ever, in his person and office; for though according to the said writings, he was to die and be buried, yet he was not to see corruption; he was to rise again, ascend on high, sit at the right hand of God, and rule till all his enemies became his foot-stool; his sufferings were to be in the way, and in order to his entrance into the glory that should always abide. The Jews have entertained a notion that Messiah the son of David shall not die; and they lay down this as a rule, that if any one sets up for a Messiah, and does not prosper, but is slain, it is a plain case he is not the Messiah. So all the wise men at first thought that Ben Coziba was the Messiah, but when he was slain it was known to them that he was not (h). And upon this principle these Jews confront the Messiahship of Jesus, saying,

And how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? For it seems Christ used the phrase the Son of man, in his discourse, though John has not recorded it; he attending to his sense, and not to his express words. The Jews rightly understood him, that by the Son of man he meant the Messiah, and by his being lifted up, his death; but they did not understand, how the Messiah could die, and yet abide for ever; and therefore since he intended himself by the Son of man, they concluded he talked very inconsistent with the scriptures, and with the character he assumed, and ask very pertly,

Who

(c) Abot R. Nathan, c. 34. Galatin, de cath. ver. l. 10. c. 6.

(d) R. Moses Hadarsan in

(e) Vid. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 49. 2. (f) T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 54. 1. Nedarim, fol. 39. 2. Berachot Rabbah, fol. 1. 2. Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2. Pirke Eliezer, c. 31. (g) Zohar in Gen. fol. 85. 4. Bemidbar Rabbah, §. 13. fol. 209. 4. Jarchi & Saadiah Gaon in *Dan.* vii. 13. & R. Jehos in Aben Ezra in ibid. (h) Maimon. Hilchot Melachim, c. 11. §. 3, 4. Vid. Berachot Rabbah, §. 98. fol. 86. 2.

Who is this Son of man?] Is there any other son of man besides the Messiah? And can the son of man, that is the Messiah, be lifted up, or die, who is to abide for ever? And if thou art to be lifted up, or die, thou art not the Messiah or Daniel's Son of man, whose kingdom is everlasting. But how come the Jews themselves to say, that the days of the Messiah, according to some, are but forty years, according to others seventy, according to others, three hundred and sixty-five (i)? Yea, they say, he shall be as other men, marry, have children, and then die (A). And how comes it to pass that Messiah ben Joseph shall be slain (A)? The truth of the matter is this, they having lost the true sense of the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and observing some that seem to differ, and which they knew not how to reconcile, have fancied two Messiahs, the one that will be much distressed and be overcome and be slain; the other, who will be potent and victorious.

35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

Then Jesus said unto them] Not directly answering to their questions, but suggests to them their ignorance and stupidity, amidst so much light that was about them.

Yet a little while is the light with you] Meaning either himself, the light of the world, chapter viii. 12. and xii. 46. who was to be but a very little while longer with them, a few days more, and he was to go away from them by death, and be seen and heard no more by them: or the Gospel, which, though that was to continue somewhat longer, it being after Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension, to be preached to the Jews, both in Judea, and in other parts of the world; yet that would be but for a little while, as the event has shewn; for the Jews rejecting the Gospel, and putting it away from them, the apostles, as they were ordered, turned to the Gentiles, Acts xiii. 46, 47.

Walk while ye have the light] That is, as it is explained in the following verse, *believe ye in the light*; which the Persic version adds here, and leaves out there: and the sense is, believe in the Messiah, and in his Gospel; embrace him and that, and walk on in him, and worthy of him and of his Gospel, as children of the light:

Lest darkness come upon you] Suddenly, at an unawares; either a greater degree of the darkness

of ignorance and unbelief; even a judicial blindness and stupidity, which did seize on that people, and continues upon them to this day; or the darkness of afflictions, calamities, and distress, and which have come upon them to the uttermost, to the destruction of their temple, city, and nation; or else a worse darkness, even blackness of darkness, outer darkness in hell, where are weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

For he that walketh in darkness, knoweth not whither he goeth] He cannot see his way, nor the stumbling-blocks that lie in it, and the dangers he is exposed unto; nor does he know where it leads, and what is the end of it; and just so it is with a man in a state of unregeneracy, and more especially under judicial blindness: he is not aware of the pits and snares that lie in his way, or of the dark mountains on which he stumbles, and though destruction and misery are in his ways, he knows not that he is going thereunto.

36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

While ye have light, believe in the light] Receive the Messiah, and credit the Gospel-revelation; this is an explanation of the exhortation in the preceding verse:

That ye may be the children of the light] That is, that they might appear to be such who are enlightened persons; and such are truly so, who are made light in the Lord, or who are enlightened by the Spirit of God to see their own sinfulness, impotency, and unrighteousness, and their need of Christ, and his righteousness and strength, and of salvation by him; and who are made meet, by the grace of God, to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; and which is made manifest by believing in Christ, and walking on in him, as they have received him, and by walking honestly, as in the day-time, and circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, for such walk as children of the light.

These things spake Jesus, and departed] From those Jews, as being unworthy of any further conversation with him; and from Jerusalem, very likely to Bethany, whither he frequently retired, especially at night, during the few days before the passover;

And did hide himself from them] For his safety, for he knew that they were irritated by what he said, and would seek to lay hold upon him, and deliver him to the sanhedrim; and whereas his hour was not yet fully come, there were a few more sands in the glass to run, he provided for

(i) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 99. 2.

Sanhedrim, c. 11. §. 1.

(A) Maimon in Misne.

(i) T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 1.

his security, by absconding from them; and this was an emblem of his wholly removing from them, and leaving them and their house desolate; and it is very likely that from this time forward, they saw him no more as ministering the word unto them; and also of his taking his Gospel from them in a little time, and of his hiding the things of it from them, which respected himself, and salvation by him.

37 ¶ But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

But though he had done so many miracles before them] Openly, and in the presence of them; meaning those miracles which were done at Jerusalem, as those which brought Nicodemus to him; and to an acknowledgment of him as a teacher sent from God; and particularly the cure of the lame man at Bethesda's pool, the giving sight to the man that was born blind, by anointing his eyes with clay, and sending him to wash in the pool of Siloam, and the raising Lazarus from the dead at Bethany, which was within two miles of Jerusalem, in the presence of many of them who were come there to comfort Martha and Mary.

Yet they believed not on him] The miracles done by Christ before their eyes, which they could not deny, nor disprove, and were so many, and so great, were aggravations of their unbelief; and such indeed is the nature of that sin, and so deeply rooted is it, that the most powerful means, and mighty works, will not bring a person to believe in Christ, without the powerful and efficacious grace of God.

38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled] For though this was not the end of these men in disbelieving Christ, that the words of Esaias might be fulfilled, yet hereby they were eventually fulfilled; and though the predictions of the prophet had no such influence on the wills of these men, as to lay upon them a coercive necessity, or force them to do, or to answer to the things foretold; yet they were to have, and had an infallible event or completion, otherwise the foreknowledge of God, and the authority of the prophetic writings, could not be maintained:

Which he spake] In *Isaiab* liii. 1.

Lord, who hath believed our report?] Which words the prophet delivered by way of complaint to

God the Father; not so much with respect to his own time, and the men of it, as to the times of Christ and his apostles, whom he personates; for the whole chapter is a prophecy of the Messiah, and suggests, that in those times there would be but few that would believe the report made in the ministry of the Gospel concerning the Messiah, his person, office, and grace, though so true in itself, and so much confirmed by miracles, and mighty deeds; the reason of which, he intimates, would be his outward mean appearance in the world; and which, it is certain, was the true reason, God denying the influence of his powerful and special grace, as follows:

And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?] Meaning either the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, and which was hid from the wise and prudent; or the Lord Jesus Christ himself, who is the power of God, by whom he made the heavens and the earth, and upholds them in their being, and by whom he has redeemed and saved his people; and who was not revealed, neither to them in the ministry of the word, nor in them the hope of glory: or the holy Spirit is meant, the finger of God, by whom these surprising miracles were done; and yet he did not exert himself in these persons, in the special operations of his grace; or the powerful and efficacious grace of God itself is designed, which was not put forth, and did not attend the report of the gospel, and therefore it was not believed.

39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

Therefore they could not believe] God had determined to leave them to the blindness and hardness of their hearts, and to deny them his grace, which only could cure them of it, and enable them to believe: he had foretold this in prophecy, and they were manifestly the persons spoken of; and therefore considering the decrees of God, the predictions of the prophet, and the hardness of their hearts they were left unto, it was morally impossible they should believe.

Because that Esaias said again] In *Isa.* vi. 9, 10.

40 He hath blinded their eyes; and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

He hath blinded their eyes, &c.] It is of no great moment, whether the *he*, who is said to blind and harden, be God or Christ, or whether the words be rendered, *it hath blinded, &c.* that is, malice or wickedness; or whether they be read impersonally,

sonally, *their eyes are blinded*, &c. since God or Christ blind and harden not by any positive act, but by leaving and giving men up to the blindness and hardness of their hearts, and denying them the grace which could only cure them, and which they are not obliged to give; and which was the case of these Jews, so as never to be converted, or be turned even by external repentance and reformation, that they might be healed in a national way, and be preserved from national ruin, as it follows,

That they should not see with their eyes, &c. See the notes on *Matt. xiii. 14, 15*. The Syriac and Persic versions read, "they have blinded their eyes," &c.

41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

These things said Esaias] Concerning the blinding and hardening of the Jews:

When he saw his glory, and spake of him] When he saw, in a visionary way, the glory of the Messiah in the temple, and the angels covering their faces with their wings at the sight of him; and when he spake of him as the King, the Lord of hosts, whom he had seen, *Isaiah vi. 1—10*, from whence it is clear that he had respect to the Jews in the times of the Messiah. The prophet says in *ch. i. 1*, that he saw the Lord: the Targumist renders it, *I saw, וי ראה את כבוד יהוה* the glory of Jehovah; and in *ch. 6*, he says, *mine eyes have seen the king, Jehovah, Zebaoth, the Lord of hosts*; which the Chaldee paraphrase renders, *mine eyes have seen, וי ראה, "the glory of the Shekinah,"* the King of the world, the Lord of hosts. Agreeable to which our Lord says here, that he saw his glory, the glory of his majesty, the glory of his divine nature, the train of his divine perfections, filling the temple of the human nature; and he spoke of him as the true Jehovah, the Lord of hosts; and which therefore is a very clear and strong proof of the proper divinity of Christ. And it may be observed from hence, that such persons who have a true, spiritual, and saving sight of Christ, of the glory of his person, and the fulness of his grace, cannot but be speaking of him to others, either in private, or in public, as Isaiah here did, and as the church in *Cant. v. 10—16*, and as the apostles of Christ, *John i. 14*. *1 John i. 1, 2*, and indeed, should they hold their peace, the stones would cry out; such must, and will speak of his glory in his temple, *Psal. xxix. 9*, and *cxlv. 4—7, 11, 12*.

42 ¶ Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him,

lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

Nevertheless among the chief rulers also] These were the members of the Jewish sanhedrim, as Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and others:

Many believed on him] That he was the Messiah, though they did not believe in him in a spiritual and saving manner, as their Redeemer and Saviour, only in their minds, being convicted by his miracles, gave an assent unto him, as the promised Messiah. The two persons just mentioned may be thought truly to have believed in Christ; but the many here spoken of seem to have had only an historical faith in him, as appears by what follows:

But because of the Pharisees they did not confess him] As they ought to have done, and as they would have done, if their faith had been right; for where with the heart men believe in Christ to righteousness, there, with the mouth, confession is made to salvation; and between a non-confession of Christ, and a denying him, is no medium; and Christ interprets the one to be the same with the other; see *Rom. x. 9, 10*. *Matt. x. 32, 33*; and this they did not do, because of the Pharisees, who were the inveterate and implacable enemies of Christ, and were the prevailing party in the sanhedrim: wherefore these chief rulers, though many, were afraid of them.

Lest they should be put out of the synagogue] For they had made a decree in the sanhedrim, that whoever confessed that Jesus was the Messiah, should be cast out; and they had put it into execution upon the man born blind, whose eyes Christ opened, for speaking in favour of his benefactor; and this had struck terror into the minds, not only of the common people, but of the chief rulers themselves; for it was looked upon as a very dreadful thing to be put out of the synagogue; see the note on chapter ix. 22.

43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

For they loved the praise of men] To be esteemed of men, to have their applause, and receive honour from them:

More than the praise of God] Than either to receive honour from him, and be praised by him, or to praise and glorify him. By confessing Christ they knew they should run the risk of losing their places of honour and profit, and of falling under the disgrace and contempt of men; and therefore they chose rather not to confess Christ, than by so doing to glorify God, and please him, and be praised by him, as all the faithful professors of Christ will be at the last day; for then every such

such an one will have praise of God, and it will be said, *Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*

44 ¶ Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

Jesus cried and said] Upon this occasion, on account of the prevailing hardness and unbelief of the Jewish nation, and the non-confession of him by those who did believe him to be the Messiah. He cried with a loud voice, that he might be heard, and his audience left inexcusable; it denotes the concern of his mind, the vehemency of his spirit, and that openness and freedom in which he discharged his ministry, by shewing the nature, excellency, and usefulness of believing in him, and the dangerous consequences of unbelief:

He that believeth on me, believeth not on me] Which is not to be understood simply and absolutely, for this would be a contradiction in terms: they that believe in Christ, do believe in him, and they do right to believe in him; Christ is the object of faith; he is proposed as such in the Gospel; and it is his Father's will, and his own advice, that his people should believe in him: but then those that truly believe in him, do not believe in him as a mere man, but as God, as the Son of God; and not as separate from, or to the exclusion of his Father: nor do they believe in him as a new, or another God, but as the one God with the Father and the Spirit; for he and his Father are one: nor do they believe in him *only*; and so the Arabic version reads; but in God the Father also: nor does their faith rest in him, but it proceeds through him, as the mediator, unto God; see 1 Peter i. 21. Besides, he is here to be considered in his office-capacity, as being sent of God; and he that believes on him as the sent of God, does not so much believe on him, as on the sender of him, as follows:

But on him that sent me] Just as whatever honour or dishonour are done to an ambassador, sent by an earthly king to a foreign court, are not so much done to the ambassador that is sent, as to the king that sends him; for what is done to him, is all one as if it was personally done to his prince: so he that despises Christ, despises him that sent him; and he that receives Christ, receives him that sent him; and he that believes on Christ, believes on him that sent him; see Luke x. 16. *Matt. x. 40.*

45 And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.

Not with bodily eyes, for there were many that saw Christ, who never saw the Father: they saw

Christ as a mere man, and were offended at the meanness of his outward appearance: they saw nothing divine in him, nor the glory of the Father through him; but with the eyes of the understanding, whoever saw or perceived the glory of Christ in his miracles, saw the glory of God in them also, for the Father that dwelt in him did the works, *John ii. 11. and chap. xi. 40. and xiv. 10.* and whoever truly sees Christ with an eye of faith, sees his glory, as the glory of the only-begotten of the Father, as the brightness of his Father's glory, as having the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him, the same perfections as in the Father; so that he that hath seen the one, hath seen the other also, *John xiv. 9.*

46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

I am come a light into the world] And even as the light of it, being the sun of righteousness that was to arise, and now was risen, to enlighten men with the light of the living; see *John iii. 19. and chapter viii. 12.*

That whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness] God's elect themselves, whilst in a state of unregeneracy and unbelief, are in darkness; when Christ shines in upon them, and infuses the light of faith into them, they are no longer in darkness; the darkness is past, at least in a great measure, and the true light shines; in which they see light, see the glory and grace of Christ, and the invisible realities of another world: nor do they continue in the darkness of sin, ignorance, and unbelief, but walk in the light of truth, faith, and holiness, until the perfect day comes, when all the shadows of remaining darkness will flee away.

47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

And if any man hear my words, and believe not] Men may hear the Gospel of Christ, and not understand it; and they may understand it literally and grammatically, though not spiritually and experimentally, and not believe it; not so much as give credit or an assent to the truth of it, but reject and deny it; for though faith comes by hearing to some, it does not come to all: some receive no profit by hearing it, because it is not mixed with faith by them. The Alexandrian copy, and all the Oriental versions, and also Nonnus, read the last clause thus, "and keep them not;" or does not observe them, is negligent of them, and shews no regard, and yields not the obedience of faith to them; the sense is the same.

I judge

I judge him not] I do not accuse him to the Father, nor do I condemn him, nor shall I take vengeance on him for so doing; meaning, that he should do none of these things now, though hereafter he will be a swift witness against him, and will convict, and condemn him, and pass sentence on him, and execute it:

For I came not to judge the world, but to save the world] Christ, at his first coming, came not under the character of a Judge, but a Saviour; wherefore, suitable to his character, and the end of his coming, he would not accuse, condemn, or judge any man, even the greatest unbelievers in him and despisers of him, but would leave them to another day, when righteous judgment shall take place.

48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

He that rejecteth me] As the Messiah, with abhorrence and contempt, as many among the Jews did, who would not have him to reign over them, but sought to put him to death:

And receiveth not my words] The doctrines of the Gospel, but disbelieves them, and denies them to be true, looking upon them as the doctrines of a mere man, and an impostor:

Hath one that judgeth him] Let not such an one think that he shall escape righteous judgment; though Christ does not judge him now, there is one that judges him, yea, even now; and declares, that he that believeth not shall be damned, and that he is condemned already:

The word that I have spoken unto you, the same shall judge him in the last day] According to the different dispensations wicked men are under in this world, will be the rule of their judgment hereafter: such who are only under the law of nature, will be judged according to that, that will accuse them, convict them, and condemn them: such who have been under the law of Moses, or the written law, will be arraigned, proved, and pronounced guilty, and punished by, and according to that law: and such who have been under the Gospel-dispensation, and have been favoured with the revelation of the Gospel, but have contemned and denied it, that will judge them at the last day. The judge will act by its present declaration, and according to that proceed, as it stands in *Mark* xvi. 16. It will rise up in judgment against such persons, and be an aggravation of their condemnation.

49 For I have not spoken of myself; but

the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

For I have not spoken of myself] As man, or as separate from his Father; his doctrine was not human, but divine, and therefore a rejection of it cannot escape notice at the future judgment:

But the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak] Christ, as man, had his mission, and commission, and his instructions from his Father to preach the Gospel unto men; he was anointed for it by the Holy Ghost; he was enjoined the preaching of it by his Father, and the several doctrines he published were delivered him by him; see *John* viii. 28, and chapter xvii. 8.

50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

And I know that his commandment is life everlasting] By his commandment is not meant the law; that indeed is often stiled the commandment; and it is the commandment of God; and many excellent things are said of it; and among the rest it is called life, *Deut.* xxx. 15. but not everlasting life: it only promised a continuation of natural life to man, on condition of obedience to it; more than this it did not promise to Adam, in innocence; and what it promised to the obedient Israelites, was only a prolongation of natural life in the land which God gave unto them: but it neither promises, nor gives spiritual life to the fallen sons of Adam. It leaves men as it finds them, dead in trespasses and sins; and cannot communicate either a life of sanctification, or of justification to them; nor does it so much as give them any hopes of life, or shew where it is to be had; nor is everlasting life to be obtained by the works of it: justification is not by the works of the law; nor salvation by works of righteousness done by men; and consequently eternal life is never to be attained unto by obedience to the commands of the law: it is so far from being in this sense life everlasting, that it is the ministration of condemnation and death. But the Gospel is here meant, and is called a commandment; not that it has the nature of a law, or consists of precepts, as the law does; but because it is by the commandment of the everlasting God published by Christ, and his apostles. Christ, as appears from the preceding verse, had a commandment from his Father, what he should say and speak; now, not the doctrine he delivered was the commandment itself, but it was a commandment of

of the Father that he should deliver that doctrine; besides, the word *commandment* sometimes signifies no other than a doctrine; as in *Psalms* xix. 8. 1 *John* ii. 7. and the sense is, that the doctrine of the Gospel, which Christ had in commission from the Father to preach, is life everlasting; and is so called, because it is a means of quickening sinners with a spiritual life, which issues in an eternal one; it is *the savour of life unto life*, and the Spirit which giveth life, and is the ministration of it; and it is a means of implanting the graces of the Spirit of God in the heart, which spring up unto everlasting life; and of bringing souls to the knowledge of Christ, which is the beginning, pledge, and earnest of eternal life: and besides all this, it gives an account of the nature of eternal life; it directs the way unto it, which is by Christ, and describes the persons who shall enjoy it; shewing, that their title to it is the righteousness of Christ, and their meetness for it the regenerating grace of the Spirit; and that all that believe in Christ shall have it:

Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak] And no otherwise, and therefore ought to be received, and not rejected. This is to be understood not of what Christ spoke in common conversation, but in the ministry of the word, even of the doctrines of the Gospel, which were given him by his Father, and which he knew were agreeable to his mind and will, and to his counsel and covenant, and to every thing done and agreed therein, to which he was privy: these he delivered as he received them, and both as to matter and manner, as it was his Father's will and pleasure he should: he preached the righteousness of God, and hid it not; he declared his faithfulness, and his salvation, and concealed not his lovingkindness and truth, *Psalms* xl. 9. 10. Now, though it is a sufficient ground of faith to receive and believe the doctrines of the Gospel, because Christ has spoken them, who is truth itself; yet it is a further confirmation of them, that they are what his Father, the God of truth, said unto him: and his delivering them as he had them from him, is an instance of his faithfulness to him that sent him; and should be imitated by his ministers, who ought to declare the whole counsel of God, and keep back nothing they have received from Christ, and which may be profitable to the souls of men.

C H A P. XIII.

In this chapter we find Christ washing his disciples feet, §. 1—5. Peter refuseth to be washed, but afterward desireth it, §. 6—11. Christ exhorteth them to humility and charity, §. 12—17. telleth that one of them should betray him, and comforteth them

against it, §. 18—21. sheweth that he it is to whom he would give a sop, §. 22—26. speaketh to his disciples about his glorification, §. 27—33. exhorteth them to mutual love, §. 34—36. sheweth, Peter he should deny him thrice, §. 37, 38.

NOW before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

Now before the feast of the passover] This feast was instituted as a memorial of the deliverance of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and was an eminent type of Christ; and this passover was what Christ had greatly desired, it being his last, and when he was to express his great love to his people, mentioned here, by dying for them. It was two days before this feast, so the Perfic version reads this text, at Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, that the things recorded in this chapter were transacted; see *Matt.* xxvi. 2, 6.

When Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father] The death of Christ is here signified by a departing out of this world, a way of speaking frequently used by the Jews, as expressive of death; see the note on *Phil.* i. 23. Much such a phrase is made use of concerning Moses, of whom it is said (a), that the fourth song that was sung in the world, was sung by him, "When his time was come, *למנוח* "למנוח to depart out of the world." An easy and familiar form of speech to express death by, as if it was only a removing from one place to another. The place from whence Christ was about to remove is called *this world*; this present world, into which he was come to save sinners, and in which he then was, and where he had already met with very ill usage, and barbarous treatment, and was to meet with more: where he was going is said to be *to the Father*, in whose bosom he lay, by whom he was sent, from whom he came; to his God and Father, and the God and Father of all his people, to take his place in their nature at his right hand. A time or hour was fixed for this; for as there was a set time, called *the fulness of time*, agreed upon for his coming into the world, so there was for his going out of it: and now *this his hour was come*; the time was now up, or at least very near at hand; and he *knew* it, being God omniscient: which gave him no uneasiness; nor did

(a) Targum in Cant. i. 1, 7. Vid. Be'eshit Rabba, §. 96. fol. 84. 1. & Debarim Rabbi, §. 11. fol. 245. 2.

did it in the least alienate his affections from his people: for

Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end] The objects of his love are described by his property in them, *his own*: by whom are meant, not all mankind, who are his by creation; nor the Jews, who were of his nation, and countrymen according to the flesh; nor the twelve apostles only, whom he had chosen; but all the elect of God, who are his own, by his choice of them, by the Father's gift of them to him, by the purchase he made of them with his blood, and by his effectual call of them by his grace: these are also described by their condition and situation, *which were in the world*; which is not said to distinguish them from the saints that were in heaven, or to express their former state of unregeneracy, but their present situation in this vain and evil world, which is no objection to Christ's love to them; for though whilst in this world they carry about with them a body of sin and death, are liable to many snares and temptations, and are involved in the troubles, and exposed to the hatred of the world, yet are, and always will be, the objects of the love and care of Christ. The acts of his love to them are expressed both in time past, and to come: *having loved them*; so he did from everlasting, with a love of complacency and delight, which he shewed as early by espousing their persons to himself, by undertaking their cause, by taking the charge of their persons, and the care of both their grace and glory, and in time by assuming their nature: and having done all this, *he loved them to the end*; and which he shewed by dying for them; and continues to shew by interceding for them in heaven, by supplying them with all grace, and by preserving them from a final and total falling away; and he will at last introduce them into his kingdom and glory, when they shall be for ever with him; so that his love to them continues not only to the end of his own life, nor barely to the end of theirs, but to the end of the world, and for ever; and so *וְעַד עַד* signifies, and is rendered *continually*, Luke xviii. 5. and in the Septuagint on *Psalms* ix. 6, 18. and xlv. 23. answers to *נָשָׂא* which signifies *for ever*; and is so translated here by the Ethiopic version.

2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;

And supper being ended] Or rather "supper being," or "it being supper-time," for it was not ended; not the paschal-supper, nor the Lord's supper, but the supper in Simon's house at Bethany, two days before the passover. There is no mention

made in this whole chapter of the passover-supper, or of any of its rites: the washing of the disciples feet was a peculiar action of our Lord's, and had no manner of regard to any usage among the Jews at such a time; nor was it ever usual with them, at the passover, to wash the feet of those that eat of it; there is not the least trace of any such custom in any of their writings: besides, it is said in so many words, in *John* i. 1. that this was *before the feast of the passover*; and by comparing it with *Matthew* xxvi. 2, 6. it appears to be two days before it; and so much time seems necessary to be allowed, for Judas to do what he did after this supper, in which he was first instigated to it: and that the feast of the passover was yet to come, when this supper was ended, and Judas had taken the sop, and was bid to do quickly what he did, is manifest from the sense the disciples put upon those words of Christ, who thought he ordered him to get the necessaries for the feast, *John* 29. which can be understood of no other than the feast of the passover, which was at hand, and for which many things were to be got ready; to which may be added, that Satan's entering into Judas, and putting it into his heart to betray his master, and his covenanting with the high priests to do it for such a sum, were before the passover-supper, as is clear from *Luke* xxii. 1, 3, 4, 7. Nor is it reasonable to suppose that Judas could meet that night, after the supper, with the chief priests, captains, and all the council, the great sanhedrim, who could not be together; since by the law of the passover, every head of a family was to be with his respective family: and if this could be supposed, yet there seems to be some time between this agreement, and the execution of it, in which he sought for a proper opportunity, *Matt.* xxvi. 16. Nor can it be thought there was time enough to do all he did, as to covenant with the chief priests, form his scheme for apprehending Christ, and get such a number of men together for that purpose, between the supper, and the time of night in which Christ was betrayed. Besides, certain it is, that Christ and his disciples arose from the place where he eat his supper, and went from thence elsewhere, *John* xiv. 31. which cannot be understood very well of any other departure than his going from Bethany to Jerusalem, and not of his going from Jerusalem to the garden, which is afterwards spoken of as a distinct thing, *John* xviii. 1. And to say no more, there is not in this chapter the least hint of the institution of the Lord's supper, which all the other Evangelists make mention of, when they relate the last passover of our Lord. The reader may be more fully satisfied of the truth of this by consulting Dr Lightfoot, on *Matt.* xxvi. 6.

The devil having now put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him] The person Satan influenced and acted upon, for his purpose, was Judas Iscariot, Simon's son: whether this was Simon the Pharisee, or Simon the leper, in whose house Christ and his disciples were, or who he was, is not certain: was there any reason to think it might be Simon the tanner that was the father of Judas, or that either he or his father were tanners, I would venture to add one conjecture more to what has been made on *Matt. x. 4.* and *xxvii. 5.* concerning Judas's surname, Iscariot, as that it may come from *Iscortia*, which signifies a tanner's coat: for so it is said in the (b) Talmud, "What is, *אִסְכּוּרְיָא* *Iscortia*? Says Rabba bar Chanah, "It is *אֵילָן דְּעֵלְמָא* "a tanner's coat." A sort of leathern garment, as the gloss says, which tanners put over their clothes. However, this man was an apostle of Christ's whom Satan tempted to betray him; so that we see that the highest office, and greatest gifts, cannot secure men from the temptations of Satan: the manner in which he tempted him was, he put, or cast it into his heart; it was a dart, and a fiery one he threw into him, into his very heart; which shews the access Satan has into, and the influence he has upon the minds of men. His end in this temptation was to work upon him to betray Christ, his Lord and Master, who had chosen him to be an Apostle of his, and had invested him with this high office, into the hands of his enemies, in order to be put to death. This was an affair determined by God, known by Christ, and which he foretold to his disciples; yet all this did not in the least excuse the malice of Satan, and the wickedness of Judas: it was an action devilish indeed, and which, one would think, could never have entered into his heart, had not the devil put it there; and this was at supper-time, whilst they were at table together, that this thought was darted into his mind; which is mentioned to shew, that no place and company can preserve persons from the evil suggestions of the devil, and to aggravate the sin of Judas, who when, and while he was eating bread with Christ, first thought of, and determined to lift up his heel against him: moreover, it was when the ointment was poured on the head of Christ, and whilst Judas was fretting at it, that Satan took the opportunity of his choler and wrath, to stir him up to so vile an action. This account is prefaced to Christ's washing the feet of his disciples, to shew the great composure of mind Christ was in, though he knew what was doing; and his wonderful condescension in washing the feet of so vile a creature, into whose heart Satan had already put

it to betray him; and also his care of, and love to the rest of the disciples, when Satan had got possession of one of them.

3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

Jesus knowing that the Father] These words express the sense Christ had of his own greatness and dignity as mediator:

That the Father had given all things into his hands] All the persons of the elect, all blessings both of grace and glory for them, and power and authority over all other persons and things, to make them subservient to his purposes:

And that he was come from God] Had his mission and commission, as man, from God; did not come of himself, but he sent him:

And went to God] Or was going to him in a very little time, to sit at his right hand, to have a name above every name, and to have angels, authorities, and powers subject to him; which, as it shews his high esteem with his Father, and his exalted character as mediator, so it greatly illustrates his wonderful humility, that in the view, and under a sense and consideration of all this, he should condescend to wash the feet of his disciples; of which an account is given in the following verses.

4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

He riseth from supper] In the midst of the entertainment, and which no doubt was considerable, his mind being intent on something else; and it being his meat and drink to do his Father's will, he rises and leaves his disciples sitting to finish their meal; and whilst they were murmuring at the waste of the ointment poured on his head, and were filled with indignation at it, as they all of them were, see *Matt. xxvi. 8.* he rises up to wash their feet; amazing patience and humility!

And laid aside his garments] Not all his garments, only his upper ones, that he might better dispatch the business he was going about; and which was an emblem of his laying aside, as it were for a while, his glory and dignity as the Son of God, and of his appearing in the form of a servant.

And took a towel] Or linen cloth, *אֵילָן*, the same with, *אֵילָן* in the Jerusalem Talmud (c):

And girded himself] With the towel, or linen cloth, which served both for a girdle, and after he

(b) T. Bab. Nedarim, fol 55. 2. Vid. Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Oelim, c. 16. §. 4. & Oholot, c. 8. §. 1.

(c) Sabbat, fol. 3. 1. & 12. 1.

he had washed his disciples feet, to wipe them with. This was a servile habit; so servants used to stand at the feet of their masters, girt about with a linen cloth (*d*); and shews, that *the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.*

5 After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded.

After that he poureth water into a bason] This also was a servile work, and what properly belonged to servants to do; see *John* ii. 5, 6, 7. The bason to wash the feet in, called by the Jews, *מריבית* was fixed by their doctors to hold "from two logs to nine kabs (*e*); not "from "two logs to ten," as Dr Lightfoot has rendered the passage referred to. A kab held about a quart of our measure, and a log was the fourth part of a kab.

And began to wash the disciples' feet] This custom of washing the feet was not used by the Jews at their passover, nor at their private entertainments, or common meals, but at the reception of strangers or travellers, which were just come off of a journey, whereby they had contracted dirt and filth; and was a servile work, never performed by superiors to their inferiors, but by inferiors to superiors; as by the wife to the husband, by the son to the Father, and by the servant to his master; and was an instance of great humility in any others; as in Abigail, who said to David, *Let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord*, 1 Sam. xxv. 41. upon which place some Jewish Rabbins (*f*) have this note: "This she said, *על דרך הנהגה* "by way of humility," to shew, that it would have been "sufficient to her, if she became a wife to one "of the servants of David, and washed his feet, "as was the custom of a wife to her husband." But what a surprising instance of humility and condescension is this, that Christ, the Lord and Master, should wash the feet of his disciples, when it was their proper work and business to have washed his? Though Dr Lightfoot says, he does not remember that this was expected from the disciple toward his master, unless included in that rule, "That the disciple is to honour his master, "more than his father; whereas it was a fixed point (*g*) with the Jews, "That all works which "a servant does to his master, a disciple does to

"his master, except unloosing his shoe." Since therefore it was the work of a servant to wash his master's feet, a disciple was obliged to do this to his master likewise:

And to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded] As he began he went through with his work; and having washed their feet, he wipes them clean; which may design the purity of the lives and conversations of the saints in general, and of the ministers of the Gospel in particular, whose feet are beautiful when shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, and their conversations are as become the Gospel they preach; both which they have from Christ.

6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter said unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet!

Then cometh he to Simon Peter] After having washed the feet of some of the disciples, as is thought by some interpreters, and particularly the feet of Judas, without any repulse; though others are of opinion that he began with Peter, who modestly, and out of reverence to him, refuses to be washed by him:

And Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet!] He speaks as one surprised and astonished that Christ should offer to do any such thing to him; that he, who was the Son of the living God, should wash the feet of such a sinful man as he was; that those hands, with which he had wrought such miracles, as the opening the eyes of the blind, cleansing lepers, and raising the dead, should be employed in washing his defiled feet, the meaner and inferior parts of his body; this he thought was greatly below his dignity and character, and too much to be done by him to such a worthless creature as he was.

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now] Peter knew that he was about to wash his feet, and the rest of the disciples, but he did not know the meaning and mystery of it, what Christ designed by it, and what instruction they were to receive from it:

But thou shalt know hereafter] As he did, when he had performed this service, and explained it to him. This may teach us, under dark providences, the meaning of which is not yet known by us, to wait the Lord's own time to make things clear and plain to us; and in the mean time patiently submit to the divine will.

(d) Suetonius in Caligula, c. 26.

(e) 4. §. 1. Vid. Misn. Celim, c. 20. §. 2.

(f) R. Levi ben Gerson & R. Samuel Laniado in 1 Sam. xxv. 41. Vid. T.

Bab. Cetubot, fol. 96. 1. & Maimon, Hilch. Ishot, c. 21. §. 7.

(g) T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 96. 1.

(e) Misn. Yadaim,

(f) R. Levi

Bab. Cetubot,

fol. 96. 1.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet] Before he had behaved with modesty, but now with obstinacy and perverseness; and though these expressions might arise from great reverence to Christ, yet they were wrong and rashly spoken. Peter ought to have been satisfied with Christ's reply, and have submitted, since though he then did not know the reason of such a surprising conduct, he should hereafter. In order therefore to bring him to a compliance,

Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me] He does not say, if I wash not thy feet, but *thee*, meaning not with water, but with his blood, and by his Spirit; for Christ uses the word *wash* here, not literally, but in a mystical and figurative sense, and takes an occasion, as he sometimes does, from things natural, to discourse of things spiritual: moreover, he does not say, thou hast no part *in* me, but thou hast no part *with* me; that is, no fellowship and communion with me; see 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15. and it is as if he should say, "Peter, if I had not washed thee with the washing of regeneration by my Spirit, and if I should not shed my blood for thee, and wash thee in it from thy sins, sad would be thy case; thou couldst have no communion with me in this world, nor any part or portion with me in the heavenly inheritance hereafter." Hence, it may be observed, that unless a man is washed by Christ, he can have no part with him in this, or the other world. God's elect have a part, an interest in Christ, through eternal, electing, and covenant-grace; and in consequence of this are washed by Christ, both with his blood, and with the washing of regeneration: and this is done in order that they may have a part with Christ, spiritual fellowship with him now, and possess with him the undefiled inheritance, when time shall be no more.

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

Simon Peter saith unto him] Being convinced of his mistake in not submitting to Christ, fearing he should be deprived of communion with him, than which nothing was more desirable to him, or more highly esteemed of by him, says,

Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head] Which shews the sense he had of the general pollution of his nature, and the need he stood in particularly of having his feet, hands, and head washed, both as a minister, and a be-

liever. By his *feet* may be meant, either the grace of faith, which is the foot of the soul, by which it goes to Christ, and walks on in him, and was not without its imperfections; or the affections of the mind, which are that to the soul as the feet are to the body; and when they move right, move Heavenward, Godward, and Christward; but sometimes they are inordinate, and cleave to the things of this world: or the outward life and conversation is meant, which is attended with daily infirmities; and each of these need washing in the blood of Christ. His *hands* may design all his actions, works, services, duties, and performances, the hand being the instrument of action; and not only the hands of wicked men, but even of saints, need washing, their best righteousnesses being as filthy rags. By his *head* may be meant doctrines and principles imbibed in the mind, and expressed by the lips, which were not free from mistake and pollution, and needed purging and cleansing; for the disciples were not as yet clear from the prejudices of the Jewish nation, especially relating to the nature of the Messiah's kingdom.

10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

Jesus saith to him, He that is washed] Not he that is baptized; for every such person is not wholly clean, but he who is regenerated by the Spirit of God, or rather, who is washed in the blood of Christ: such an one

Is clean every whit] Is all over clean; not that he has no sin in him, nor commits any; but as he is washed in the blood of Christ, and justified by his righteousness, he is wholly and entirely clean in the sight of God; for he is justified from all things he could not be justified from by the law of Moses; all his sins are pardoned, and he is perfectly righteous before God; and so is perfectly clean through the word or sentence of justification and absolution pronounced on him, which must be understood in a forensic or law sense. And such an one

Needeth not save to wash his feet] The feet of his life and conversation, which are continually gathering dirt, and need daily washing in the blood of Christ; and therefore recourse must be constantly had to that fountain to wash in, for sin and for uncleanness. The allusion is either to persons washed all over in a bath, who have no need to wash again, unless their feet, which may contract some soil in coming out of it; or to travellers, who have often need to wash their feet, though no other part, and such is the case of the children of God in this life; or rather to the priests,

priests, who having bathed themselves in the morning, needed not to wash again all the day, except their hands and feet, on certain occasions (b).

And ye are clean, but not all] Which shews, that justifying and regenerating grace are common to all the true disciples of Christ; they are equally born again, alike justified, and are as clean one as another in the sight of God: not only Peter, but all the apostles, were clean, excepting one; there was one of them, Judas, who was not clean; and therefore he says, *but not all*: whence it may be observed, that among the purest societies, there are some unclean persons; there was a Judas, an unclean person among the pure disciples of Christ; there are chaff and tares among his wheat, goats among his sheep, and foolish virgins along with the wise ones.

11 For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

For he knew who should betray him] That is, Jesus, as Beza's ancient copy, and the Syriac and Persic versions read. This he knew from the beginning; not only from the beginning of his ministry, when he chose his twelve apostles, but from the beginning of time, yea, from everlasting; this being fixed by the determinate counsel of God, which he, as the omniscient God, was privy to: he knew what preparations were making, and how things were then working, in order to bring it about; he knew that Satan had already put it into Judas's heart, and that he had consented to it;

Therefore, said he, Ye are not all clean] He does not mention his name, though he could have done so, it not being as yet proper to make so full a discovery of him before the matter was ripe for execution; and also to put all the disciples upon examination of themselves.

12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

So after he had washed their feet] Not Peter's only, but the rest of the disciples also: some have thought, that he washed only the feet of some of them, and not all; but it seems, by this expression, that he performed this service to each of them: and when he had gone through it with every one of them,

And had taken his garments] And put them on,

And was set down again] At the table with his disciples, supper not being yet ended; when having

done his work as a servant, he re-assumes the air and authority of Lord and Master, and begins to teach and instruct, into the design and use of what he had been doing, which he introduces by putting this question;

He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?] They knew the outward action he had done to them, that he had washed their feet; but, as yet, they did not know the mystery of it, Christ's design in it, and what he would have them learn from it.

13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

Ye call me Master and Lord] רבי and מר *Master and Lord* were dignified titles among the Jews, which they frequently (i) gave to their doctors and men of learning, and are often to be met with in their writings: hence the disciples called Christ by these names, not out of flattery, but reverence of him, and esteem for him; nor are they blamed, but commended for it:

And ye say well, for so I am] Though he had acted the part of a servant in such a surprising manner, by washing their feet; yet he had not dropped and lost, but still maintains his place and authority as a *Master*, to teach and instruct them, and as a *Lord*, to rule and govern them.

14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

If I then, your Lord and Master] Christ argues from these titles and characters, which his disciples rightly gave him, and from what he had done to them, though he stood in such a superior relation to them, to their duty one toward another; that since, says he,

I have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet] By which he does not mean barely, that they should perform this single action; but as this was an instance of humility and condescension, and doing a good office to strangers and travellers, and was afterwards an expression of love to the saints, see 1 Tim. v. 10. so he would teach them hereby to behave in a spirit of humility and condescension to one another, to do every kind and good office, and by love to serve one another in all things.

15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

For I have given you an example] Christ is an example to his people, in many things; not in his miracu-

(b) Misna Yoma, c. 3. §. 3.

(i) Vid. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 3. 1. Derech Erets, c. 6. fol. 18. 2.

miraculous performances and mediatorial work, but in the exercise of grace, of meekness, humility, love, patience, and the like; and in the discharge of duty, in submission to ordinances, and in attending on them; and in the several duties, both to them that are without, and to them that are within; and also in his sufferings and death; not that he died merely as an example, but likewise in the room and stead of his people; but here he is spoken of as an example, in a particular instance:

That ye should do as I have done to you] Wash one another's feet, as he had washed theirs; which is not to be understood literally and singly of this action, as though this was an ordinance binding upon all persons, in all places, and to be attended to at certain stated times, as has been the practice of some: it was so understood by the church at Milan, and there practised; and this custom was continued and defended by St Ambrose, even though not received by the church of Rome; in some places the bishop used to wash the feet of those that were baptized, which in process of time being thought sufficient, instead of baptism, was forbidden by the council at Eliberis. In imitation of this, the pope every year, on Thursday in the passion week, washes the feet of twelve men; and it is an anniversary ceremony performed by the kings of England and France, to wash the feet of twelve poor people, in commemoration of this action of Christ's: but our Lord is not to be understood literally, nor of any thing that was to be done once a year, but of what was daily and constantly to be practised; and which was to be done not by one only to all the rest, but what they were mutually to do; what they were to do to one another; for the thing signified, reaches to, and is obligatory upon all christians. Our Lord's meaning is, That as he had by this action given them an example of humility, condescension, and love; so they should exercise these graces, and perform such kind offices to one another, and to all their fellow-christians.

16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

Verily, verily, I say unto you] This is a strong way of asseveration; and is used when any thing of moment and importance, and worthy of attention and observation, is delivered:

The servant is not greater than his lord] It is enough that he be as his lord, which was a common phrase among the Jews; see the notes on *Matt. x. 24, 25*. and as it is there made use of, to inform the disciples they must expect persecution, and to encourage them to bear it with patience; here it is de-

signed to engage them to humility; for if a master condescends to perform such an action, much more may a servant:

Neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him] This is also a way of speaking in use among the Jews (*k*); says R. Simeon, from what is written in *Isaiah vi. 8*. *הוּא הַמְשַׁלְחָנִי מִן הַמְּשֻׁלָּח* "he that sends is greater than he that is sent." Which is the very phrase here used by Christ; and his meaning is this, that if it was not below him, who had chose and called, and sent them forth as his apostles, to wash their feet, they who were sent by him, should not disdain to wash one another's.

17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

If ye know these things] The duties they owed to him, and one another; those kind offices of love and respect to each other; the humility, condescension, and brotherly love, which ought to be in them, and of which he had given them an example:

Happy are ye if ye do them] For the bare theory, or a mere speculative knowledge of these things, is not sufficient; not he that knows and *does not*, but he that knows and *does* his master's will, is blessed; he is blessed with communion with his Lord, and shall hereafter enter into his joy, with *Well done, good and faithful servant*. There is an happiness in doing well, and which follows on it, though not for it in a way of merit; on the other hand, persons who *know* and *do not*, are very unhappy: the Jews have a saying (*1*), "שְׂלֵמָה לְעֹשֶׂה וְשִׁלְמוֹת לְלֹמֵד" "he that learns, but not to do," it would have been better for him if he had never been created. And, says R. Jochanan, He that learns, but not to do, it would have been better for him if his secundine had been turned upon his face, and he had never come into the world."

18 ¶ I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

I speak not of you all] What he had before said on the one hand, *ye are all clean*, for one of them was not; and on the other hand, when he put an *if* upon, or seemed to doubt of their *knowing* and *doing* these things; or what he was about to say concerning his being betrayed, this he did not speak of them all:

I know whom I have chosen] Not to apostleship, for they were all chosen to that, Judas as well as the

(1) Bereshit Rabba, fol. 68. 1.

(1) Hierol. Beracot, fol. 3. 2.

the rest, but to grace and glory, to everlasting salvation and happiness; of these he was well assured that they were all clean, pure, and spotless, in the sight of God; were truly regenerated by the Spirit of God, and had an experimental and practical knowledge of the things he recommended by his example, and would be the happy persons he spake of;

But] He observes, so it is, and will come to pass, that there is one of you which will betray me:

That the scripture may be fulfilled] Psalm xli. 9. as it literally (*m*) was in Judas's betraying Christ. The passage is by many interpreted either of Ahithophel, or of some other counsellor of Absalom's, or of Absalom himself; and is applied to their conduct, with respect to David, at the time of their rebellion against him; and which is thought to be typical of the treatment Christ met with from an apostle of his: but we do not find that at the time of that rebellion, David was sick, or had any disease upon him, from whence they might hope for his death; it does not seem, as though it could be literally understood of David at all, and of the behaviour of any of his servants; but most properly of David's Son, the Messiah, Jesus, with whom every thing in the psalm agrees; and particularly this verse, which so plainly describes Judas, and expresses his base ingratitude, hypocrisy, and malice: the former part of the text is not cited, *yea, mine own familiar friend, or the man of my peace, in whom I trusted*; though it fully agrees with him, he being admitted to great familiarity with Christ, and lived peaceably with him; and who was entrusted by him with the bag, into which the money was put, which was ministered either for the sustenance of him and his apostles, or for the use of the poor: but our Lord thought fit to cite no more of it than what follows, that being sufficiently descriptive of him; and especially at this present time, when he was at table with his Lord.

He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me] He sat down with him at table frequently, and eat bread with him; and was doing so when Satan put it into his heart to betray him; which is strongly expressed, by *lifting up his heel against him*; and sets forth the ingratitude, wickedness, and cruelty of him; who, like an unruly horse that has thrown his rider, spurns at him to destroy him; and also the insidious manner in which he did it; he supplanted, he tripped him, as wrestlers do, in order to cast him down to the ground, and then trample upon him, and triumph over him: he first, מִתְרַבֵּץ "laid snares for him,"

as Jarchi explains the phrase used in the psalm, and then, חֲגִיל "he magnified his heel," he behaved proudly and haughtily to him.

19 Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he.

Now I tell you before it come] That is, gave them notice of this beforehand, that one of them should betray him:

That when it is come to pass] And they had seen it fulfilled exactly to a tittle, and according to this scripture:

Ye may believe that I am he] The Lord God omniscient, who knows and declares things before they come to pass, just as they do come to pass; which none but the eternal God can do: and that he was the Saviour and Redeemer, the Messiah spoken of and promised, the very person prophesied of in Psalm xli. For that whole psalm is applicable to Jesus Christ, the true Messiah. In *ψ. 1—3.* the happiness of such is declared, who *consider the poor*; the Messiah, in his low estate of humiliation, who became poor for the sake of his people; in *ψ. 5.* his enemies are represented as wishing for his death; their hypocrisy, perfidy, and vile designs upon his life, are aptly described in *ψ. 6, 7.* which they executed by suborning false witnesses, bringing a wrong charge, רָוַב בְּלִיָּה "A wicked accusation against him," *ψ. 8.* which succeeded, to the taking away of his life; and then they are introduced as triumphing over him lying dead in the grave, whom they believed would never rise more; but in this they were mistaken, for he was raised up again; for which he prays, *ψ. 10.* that he might requite them, as he did, by destroying their city, temple, and nation; and the whole is concluded with thankfulness to God for raising and exalting him, and setting him before his face for ever, *ψ. 11—13.* There is but one passage in it, which has any difficulty in applying it to Christ, and that is, *ψ. 4.* where he is spoken of as having sinned against the Lord; but the words may be rendered thus; *beal my soul*, that is, deliver me out of my sorrows and afflictions, לִי וְחַטָּאתִי *because I have made an offering for sin unto thee*; and well agrees with Christ, who was to make, and has made his soul an offering for sin.

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.

Verily, verily, I say unto you] You may assure yourselves of the truth of what I am going to say, and

(m) See my Book of the Prophecies of the Messiah, &c. p. 168, &c.

and which I say for your comfort and encouragement:

He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me, and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me] I have sent you in my name to preach the Gospel; you are my ambassadors, and you will be honourably received by many; and which I shall regard and take notice of, and esteem, as though they had received me; even as my Father has sent me into this world, as a Saviour and Redeemer, a Prophet, Priest, and King; and as many as have received me, are looked upon by my Father, as having received him: in short, such as cordially receive and embrace the ministers of the Gospel, receive Christ, in whose name they come, and whom they preach; and such who receive Christ, as preached and held forth in the everlasting Gospel, receive the Father of Christ; and partake of his love, grace, and kindness, shewn forth in the mission and gift of Christ to them: Christ, as mediator, personated his Father that sent him; and the ministers of Christ personate him; so that what is done to them, either in a way of reception or rejection, he takes as done to himself: it is a common saying among the Jews (n), שלוחו של אדם כמותו, "that the messenger of a man is as himself."

21 When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

When Jesus had thus said] Having spoken of the mission of his disciples by him, of their reception among men, and the notice that would be taken of it by him:

He was troubled in spirit] In his soul, which shews him to be truly and really man, and to have an human soul, which some have denied; and that to be of like passions with ours, only without sin: he was troubled, not at what he had said, but at what he was about to say concerning the betrayer; and that not so much on his own account, because of the danger, the sorrows, and sufferings he should be exposed to; as on account of the horrible blackness of the crime, and the vengeance that would fall upon the criminal; and being thus inwardly distressed at this affair,

He testified and said] He spake out openly and plainly, what he had before secretly intimated, and that with the greatest certainty:

Verily, verily, I say unto you] It is truth, it may be believed, however unexpected and strange it may seem to be:

That one of you shall betray me] To the chief priests and elders, in order to be put to death.

22 Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake.

Then the disciples looked one on another] As persons surprised and astonished, and as scarce crediting what was said; not having had the least suspicion of any one among them that could be guilty of such an action; and expressing by their looks their detestation of, and indignation at so horrible an iniquity; or they looked one to another, to observe if they could, whether the countenance of any one would discover who the person was:

Doubting of whom he spake] Not being able to conceive and imagine, who the person was he had in view; from whence it appears, that Judas, to this time, had behaved outwardly as well as any of the other disciples; he had given no occasion by his conduct to suspect him more than any other: upon this broad intimation, or rather strong protestation which Christ made, that one of them should betray him, their eyes were not turned to him directly and particularly, but to one another.

23 Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.

Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom] Not pressing upon that part of Christ's body, which would have been irreverent in John, and troublesome to Christ; but leaning at table upon his bed or couch, on which he lay; and which was next to, and just before Christ; so that he was very near unto, and seemed to lie in the bosom of Christ; as such are said to do who sit next to another at table. The posture of the Jews at table, was either *sitting* or *lying*, and a difference they make between these two; "If, say they (o), הוי יושבון, "they *sat* to eat," every one asked a blessing for himself; "but if, רסיבין, "they *lay* down," one asked a blessing for them all." This lying down was not on their backs, nor on their right side, but on their left; for they say (p), that "lying down on the back, is not called רסיבין, "lying down;" "and lying on the right side, is not called lying down." And the reason given is (q); because they have need of the right hand to eat with; but as they elsewhere (r) observe, "They used to eat lying along, leaning on the left side, their feet to the ground, and every man on a single couch." Would you know the order in which they lay, take the account as they have given it (s); "When there

(n) T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2. Kiddushin, fol. 41. 2. & 42. 1. & 43. 1. Bava Metzia, fol. 96. 1.

(o) Mifn. Beracot, c. 6. §. 6.

(p) T. Bab. Pesachim,

fol. 108. 1.

(q) Gloss. in ibid.

(r) Gloss. in

T. Bsh. Beracot, fol. 46. 2. & Bartenora in Mifn. Beracot,

c. 6. §. 6.

(s) T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 46. 2.

“there were but two couches, the principal person lay first, and the second to him above him; and when there were three, the principal person lay in the middle, the second to him above him, and the third below him.” The form in which Christ and his disciples sat or lay at table, we may conceive was this (t); a table was placed in the middle, and as many beds or couches round it, as there were persons; Christ, the principal and most worthy person, lay first, with his head toward the table, his face somewhat turned from it, leaning on his left elbow upon the couch; in this posture lay Jesus, upon the first couch; in the same posture lay John, in the next to him, and just before him; the hinder part of his head being towards, and near the breast and bosom of Jesus; whence he is said to lean upon it: now to lie next to the principal person, was a very great honour, as well as a mark of great affection; and for John to lie next to Jesus, and as it were to lean on his bosom, shewed how much he was respected and honoured by him; and therefore John modestly conceals his name, and only says,

One of his disciples whom Jesus loved] Christ, as the Son of God, and surety of his people, loved his true disciples, as he does all his elect, alike; not one more than the other; but as man, he had a particular affection for this disciple, and therefore admitted him nearest his person, and was very familiar with him.

24 Simon Peter therefore beckened to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.

Simon Peter therefore beckened to him] Peter perhaps lay at a distance from Christ, or in some such position, that he could not whisper to him himself; and besides, he knew that John might use more freedom, as he was admitted to more familiarity with him; and being at some distance also from him, he beckened to him; which was usually done at meals, when they could not, by reason of their posture, discourse together; this being the case, *they made signs*, by nodding to one another (u); that is, as the gloss explains it, they pointed with their hands and fingers, and by nodding or beckening; such a method Peter took, signifying his desire,

That he should ask who it should be of whom he spake] Which he did not out of mere curiosity, but from an honest intention and pure zeal, that he, with the rest, might shew their abhorrence of such a person, and avoid him; and do all that lay

in their power to hinder him from putting his wicked designs into execution, and that the innocent might be free from all suspicion.

25 He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it?

He then lying on Jesus' breast] Being on the couch just before Jesus, with his back to him, he bends backwards, and falling on Jesus's breast, whispers in his ear: and

Saith unto him, Lord, who is it?] Using his interest in Christ, and making thus free with him, in compliance with Peter's request; and he was no doubt desirous himself of knowing who the person was.

26 Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.

Jesus answered, He it is] Jesus replied, by whispering; for had he spoken out, the rest could not have been so ignorant, as they still continued, after the sign was given: Christ, I say, whispered to John, and told him by what sign he might know the person, and that it was he,

To whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it] This was not the passover-sop, which was dipped into a sauce made of various things, called by the Jews *maror*; for this was not the paschal-supper, but a common supper at a private house, two days before the feast of the passover; but this sop, or rather crust of bread, which whether dipt into a liquid, or only a piece of dry bread, which Christ dipped his hand into the dish for, and took, as some think, is not very material, was a piece of common bread, which Christ took up, without regard to any custom, or ceremony used at any feasts, and gave it to the betrayer, as a sign by which John might know him:

And when he had dipped the sop] Either into some sort of broth, or any other liquid, or had dipped his hand into the dish for it:

He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon] So called, to distinguish him from another apostle, whose name was Judas, and was then present.

27 And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

And after the sop Satan entered into him] After he had taken and eaten the sop, or crust of bread, by which he was pointed out to be the betrayer,

Satan entered into him] Possessed his body, and filled his mind, and stirred him up more eagerly

(t) Vid. Altorphium de lectis veterum, p. 109, 110.

(u) T. Bab. Beracot, ibid.

to pursue with vigour his wicked design. The Jews have a saying (*x*), that "no man commits a transgression, until, *וְכָל אִישׁ לְרָעָהוּ* "a spirit of madness enters into him." Such an evil spirit entered into Judas, which pushed him on to commit this horrid iniquity:

Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly] This he said, not as approving his wicked design, and exhorting him to it as a laudable action, but rather as deriding him, having nothing to care about, or fear from him; or as upbraiding him with his perfidy and wickedness, and signifying that he should take no methods to prevent him, though he fully knew what was in his heart to do; and it seems also to express the willingness of Christ, and his eager and hearty desire to suffer and die for his people, in order to obtain salvation for them.

28 Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him.

Now no man at the table] Not one of those who lay upon the couches at the table, excepting John, to whom the signal was given,

Knew for what intent he spake this unto him] And perhaps John might not know the meaning of his last words, that he spoke concerning the act of betraying him; or did not imagine that the thing was so near and so speedily to be done as it was.

29 For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.

For some of them thought] This was the thought of some of the disciples, it may be of all of them, but John:

Because Judas had the bag] Which was for the common supply of Christ and his disciples, and for the relief of the poor; see the note on chapter xii. 6.

That Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast] The feast of the passover, which was to be two days after; and shews, that this was not the passover which Christ now eat with his disciples:

Or, that he should give something to the poor] For whom Christ cared, and had a hearty concern; and for whom Judas had very little, notwithstanding his high pretensions.

30 He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.

He then having received the sop] As soon as ever he received it, he

Went immediately out] Fearing lest an entire discovery should be made, and he be prevented accomplishing his design; or being more violently stirred up to it by Satan, who after the sop entered into him, he directly went from Bethany to Jerusalem, to the chief priests there, in order to consult and agree upon the delivery of him into their hands:

And it was night] This circumstance is added, to shew how eagerly he was bent upon it; that though it was night, it did not hinder or discourage him from setting out on his journey to Jerusalem; and as this was a work of darkness, the night was the fittest time for it, and was a proper emblem of the blackness of the crime he was going to perpetrate.

31 ¶ Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.

Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said] Christ and his true disciples being together alone, he used a greater freedom of conversation with them, and entered into some discourse about his sufferings and death; with a view to give them some instructions about their future conduct and behaviour, and in order to support them under the loss of his presence; and tells them in the first place, that

Now is the Son of man glorified] By the *Son of man*, he means himself; a phrase he often uses when speaking of himself; this was a title the Messiah went by in prophecy; was true in fact of Jesus, who was the Son of Abraham, and the Son of David, and expresses the truth of his humanity; and he rather chooses to use it now, because he is speaking of a glorification, which he in his divine nature was incapable of, and which regards either time past, present, or to come: the meaning may be, either that he had been already glorified by his doctrines and miracles; or that he was now glorified, by discovering the traitor, before he made one single overt-act towards betraying him; or that in a very short time he should be glorified, meaning at his death; see *John* xvii. 1. But how was he then glorified, when it was an accursed one, and attended with so much ignominy and reproach? He was then glorified by his Father, who supported him in it, and carried him through it; so as that he conquered all his enemies, and obtained eternal salvation for his people: moreover, the death of Christ, was not only his way to glory, but was attended with many wonderful and surprising events; as the darkness, the earthquakes, the rending of the rocks, and yail of the temple, and

(a) T. Bab. Sot., fol. 3. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 112. 1. & 217. 3.

and the like; and it was also glorious in the eyes of his Father, because hereby his purposes were accomplished, his covenant-transactions brought about, his law and justice were satisfied, and the salvation of his people finished:

And God is glorified in him] The glory of God was great, in the salvation of his elect by the death of Christ; for hereby his wisdom and power, his truth and faithfulness, his justice and holiness, as well as his love, grace, and mercy, were glorified.

32 If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.

If God be glorified in him] Seeing this is a certain truth, is indisputably matter of fact, that all the perfections of God are glorified in Christ, by his sufferings and death:

God shall also glorify him in himself] Either with himself, with his own glory, which was promised to Christ, and which he had before the world was, and for which he prays, *John xvii. 5.* or by himself, by his own power, in raising him from the dead, setting him at his own right hand, and crowning him with glory and honour:

And shall straightway glorify him] This he will do very quickly, he will not leave him in the grave, nor suffer him to see corruption; he will raise him again the third day, and give him glory.

33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

Little children, yet a little while I am with you] Christ having removed the scandal of his death, by observing, that both he and his Father would be glorified by it; begins more freely to open his mind to his disciples, and acquaint them with it; whom he addresses in the most kind, tender, and affectionate manner, *little children*; expressing the relation which subsisted between them, of which he was not unmindful; his great affection for them, his consideration of their weakness, and sympathy with them on that account; who were very ill able to bear his departure, which he now thought high time to acquaint them with, that it would be very shortly: it was but a little while he was to be with them, a few days more; the time of his departure was at hand, his hour was as it were come, and the last sands were dropping:

Ye shall seek me] As persons in distress, under great concern, not knowing what to do, or where to go:

And as I said unto the Jews] Chap. vii. 33, 34.

Whither I go ye cannot come, so now say I unto you] But with this difference, whereas the unbelieving Jews, who died in their sins, could never come whither he went; these his disciples, though they could not come now, yet they should hereafter, all of them, as well as Peter, *John 36.*

34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

A new commandment I give unto you] As parents, when they take their leave of their children, in their dying moments, give them proper instructions and orders, and lay their dying injunctions on them, so Christ, taking his leave of his disciples, gives them his; which were,

That ye love one another] As brethren in the same family, children of the same father, and fellow disciples with each other; by keeping and agreeing together, praying one for another, bearing one another's burdens, forbearing and forgiving one another, admonishing each other, and building up one another in faith and holiness: and this he calls a new commandment; that is, a very excellent one; as a new name, and a new song, denote excellent ones; or it is so called, because it is set forth by Christ, in a new edition of it, and newly and more clearly explained than before; and being enforced with a new argument and pattern, never used before, *as I have loved you*; and to be observed in a new manner, not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit: besides, though this commandment, as to the matter of it, is the same with that of Moses, *Lev. xix. 18.* yet it takes in more, and new objects; since by neighbour there, seems to be meant the children of their people, the Jews; and so they understood it only of their countrymen, and of profelytes at farthest, whereas this reaches to any other person; see *Rom. xiii. 8.* and as the measure, as well as the motive is new, for it is not now *as thyself*, but *as I have loved you*; the Jew has no reason to object as he does (*y*), to its being called a new commandment: and its being new, carries in it a reason or argument why it should be observed, as does also the following clause;

As I have loved you, that ye also love one another] Than which, nothing can or should more strongly engage to it: as Christ has loved his people freely, notwithstanding all their unworthiness and ungratefulness, so should they love one another, though there may be many things in them observable, which are disagreeable; as Christ loves all his children without any distinction, so should they love

love one another, whether poor or rich, weaker or stronger, lesser or greater believers; and as Christ loves them not in word only, but in deed and in truth, so should they love one another with a pure heart fervently, and by love serve one another.

35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

By this shall all men know] Not only by this you yourselves will know that ye have passed from death to life; that the true work of grace is begun upon your hearts; nor only by this will you know one another to be christians; but by this all men, even the men of the world will know.

That ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another] And own and acknowledge it, as Tertulian (x) says, the very heathens did in his time; who would say when they saw the christians pass along the streets, and meet and express their affection to each other, "See how they love one another!" would to God the same was as observable now. The distinguishing badge and character of a disciple of Christ, is not any outward garb, or any austerities of life, by which the disciples of John and of the Pharisees were known; nor were the ordinary nor extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, bestowed upon the disciples of Christ, what distinguished them as such; since those who were not truly his disciples, had these bestowed on them; but love to one another, brotherly love was the distinguishing character, and this is another reason or argument enforcing a regard unto it.

36 ¶ Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.

Simon Peter said unto him] One might have expected that Peter would have taken some notice of what Christ said last, about love to one another; but he passes over it, and takes no manner of notice of it; which did not arise from inattention to it, or from any dislike of it, or disaffection to it; for it appears from his whole conduct and writings, that he had the utmost regard for it; he very frequently presses it, and most fervently practised it; but having observed some words which dropped from Christ's lips, *whither I go ye cannot come*, &c. 33. his mind was intent upon them, was uneasy about them, and very much wanted to know the meaning of them; and as soon as Christ had done speaking, took the opportunity to put the question:

Lord, whither goest thou?] Imagining he was going to some distant place in the country, and which was difficult of access; whereby he betrayed his weakness and ignorance, as the Jews did, chapter vii. 35.

Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now] Which words imply, that Christ was going somewhere in a little time; he was going to the garden to surrender himself up into the hands of his enemies, and hither Peter could, and did follow him, and therefore that is not here meant; he was going to die for his people, in order to take away the sting of death and the curse of the law, and work out salvation for them; he was going to his Father in heaven, to receive gifts for men, and to send the Comforter; to open the way to heaven, take possession of it, and prepare it for his saints; to plead the cause, and transact the business of his dear children; and to receive a kingdom for himself, and return. Now hither, as yet, Peter could not follow him; for his time of suffering death was not yet come; Christ had some other work for him to do first; he must open the door of faith to the Gentiles, and preach the Gospel to them:

But thou shalt follow me afterwards] When thy time is come, and thou hast done the work allotted for thee, thou shalt follow me by dying for me; and thou shalt follow me into my kingdom and glory, and be for ever with me: all the saints shall follow Christ to heaven, who is their forerunner for them entered; and as sure as he is there, so sure shall they be also. The counsels of God are unalterable, the covenant of grace is firm and sure, the blood of Christ can never be spilled in vain, his prayers and preparations cannot be fruitless, nor the work of the Spirit be ever lost; wherefore not one of those who are given to Christ, and come to him, and follow him here, but shall follow him hereafter.

37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.

Peter said unto him] Not understanding Christ's answer, and being dissatisfied with it, he inquires,

Lord, why cannot I follow thee now?] Is the place inaccessible? Are the difficulties in the way to it insuperable? The roughness of the road, or the dangers of it, will not discourage me; I am ready to go through the greatest dangers and difficulties, to follow thee: yea,

I will lay down my life for thy sake] Whatever enemies I should meet with in following thee, would not dismay me; I would readily hazard my

my life, and chearfully lay it down in defence of thee.

38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

[Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake?] Christ speaks these words as questioning, not Peter's sincerity, but his strength; or as deriding him, or rather pitying him; as if he should say, "Thou poor vain self-sufficient man, thou dost not know what thou talkest of."

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.] Not that Peter should deny him three times, before the cock crowed once; for certain it is, that Peter denied Christ but once before the cock crew, *Mark* xiv. 68. but the meaning is, that before the cock had done crowing, or within the time of cock-crowing, he should deny him thrice: whence it follows, that there is no necessity of concluding from hence, that this night was the passover-night, and the night in which Judas betrayed Christ, and Peter denied him, but was two nights before; and therefore it is not said here, as by the other Evangelists, *this day, or this night, or this day, even this night, thou shalt deny me*; only in general before the cock crow, or within the time of cock-crowing: so that it appears, that Peter twice expressed his confidence, in laying down his life for Christ; once at the supper in Simon's house at Bethany, two days before the passover; and again at the passover-supper in Jerusalem; and as often Christ rebuked his confidence by this expression, only varying it as the different times required, and therein gave a full proof of his omniscience.

C H A P. XIV.

In this chapter Christ comforteth his disciples with the hope of heaven, *ſ. 1—11.* Promises to give them power to work miracles: telling them, that they should be denied nothing they asked in his name, *ſ. 12—15.* promiseth to send them the holy Ghost, *ſ. 16—20.* He exhorteth them to love, and obey his commandments, *ſ. 21—25.* The benefits of the holy Spirit, *ſ. 26.* Christ leaveth his peace with them, *ſ. 27—29.* and sheweth his readiness to obey his Father's will, *ſ. 30, 31.*

LET not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

[Let not your heart be troubled] In some copies this verse begins thus, "and he said to his disciples;" and certain it is, that these words are addressed to them in general, Peter being the only

person our Lord was discoursing with in the latter part of the preceding chapter; but turning, as it were, from him, he directs his speech to them all. There were many things which must needs lie heavy upon, and greatly depress the minds of the disciples; most of all the loss of Christ's bodily presence, his speedy departure from them, of which he had given them notice in the preceding chapter; also the manner in which he should be removed from them, and the circumstances that should attend the same, as that he should be betrayed by one of them, and denied by another; likewise the poor and uncomfortable situation they were likely to be left in, without any sight or hope of that temporal kingdom being erected, which they had been in expectation of; and also the issue and consequence of all this, that they would be exposed to the hatred and persecutions of men. Now in the multitude of these thoughts within them, Christ comforts them, bids them be of good heart, and exhorts them to an exercise of faith on God, and on himself, as the best way to be rid of heart-troubles, and to have peace.

[Ye believe in God, believe also in me] Which words may be read and interpreted different ways: either thus, *ye believe in God, and ye believe in me*; and so are both propositions alike, and express God and Christ to be equally the object of their faith; and since therefore they had so good a foundation for their faith and confidence, they had no reason to be uneasy: or thus, *believe in God, and believe in me*; and so both are exhortations to exercise faith alike on them both, as being the best antidote they could make use of against heart-troubles: or thus, *believe in God, and ye believe in me*; and so the former is an exhortation, the latter a proposition: and the sense is, put your trust in God, and you will also trust in me, for I am of the same nature and essence with him; *I and my Father are one*; so that if you believe in one, you must believe in the other; or thus, and so our translators render them, *ye believe in God, believe also in me*; and so the former is a proposition, or an assertion, and the latter is an exhortation grounded upon it: you have believed in God as faithful and true in all his promises, though you have not seen him; believe in me also, though I am going from you, and shall be absent for a while; this you may be assured of, that whatever I have said shall be accomplished. The words considered either way are a full proof of the true Deity of Christ, since he is represented as equally the object of faith with God the Father, and lay a foundation for solid peace and comfort in a view of afflictions and persecutions in the world.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

In my Father's house are many mansions] This he says to draw off their minds from an earthly kingdom to an heavenly one; to point out the place to them whither he was going, and to support them with the views and hopes of glory under all their troubles. By his *Father's house* is meant heaven; see 2 Cor. v. 1. which is of his Father's building, where he has, and will have all his family. This Christ says, partly to reconcile the minds of his disciples to his departure from them, and partly to strengthen their hope of following him thither; since it was his Father's, and their Father's house whither he was going, and in which *are many mansions*; abiding or dwelling-places; mansions of love, peace, joy, and rest, which always remain: and there are many of them, which does not design different degrees of glory; for since the saints are all loved with the same love, bought with the same price, justified with the same righteousness, and are equally the sons of God, their glory will be the same. But it denotes fulness and sufficiency of room for all his people; for the many ordained to eternal life, for whom Christ gave his life a ransom, and whose blood is shed for the remission of their sins, whose sins he bore, and whom he justifies by his knowledge; who receive him by faith, and are the many sons he will bring to glory. And this is said for the comfort of the disciples, who might be assured from hence, that there would be room not only for himself and Peter, whom he had promised should follow him hereafter, but for them all. Very agreeable to this way of speaking are many things in the Jewish writings: "says R. Isaac (a), How many, *מון מון מון* 'mansions upon mansions,' are there for the 'righteous in that world? And the uppermost 'mansion of them all is the love of their Lord.' Moreover, they say (b), that 'in the world to 'come every righteous man shall have, *מון א* 'mansion, to himself.' Sometimes they (c) speak of seven mansions (a number of perfection) being prepared for the righteous in the other world, though entirely ignorant of the person by whom these mansions are prepared; who here says,

If it were not so, I would have told you] This expresses the certainty of it, that his Father had a house, and in it were many mansions, room enough for all his people, or he would have in-

formed them otherwise, who must needs know the truth of these things, since he came from thence; and who never deceives with vain hopes of glory; and whatever he says is truth, and to be depended on; every thing he here delivers; both what he said before, and also what follows:

I go to prepare a place for you] Heaven is a kingdom prepared by the Father for his saints, from the foundation of the world; and again, by the presence and intercession of Christ, who is gone before, and is as a forerunner entered into it, and has took possession of it in the name of his people; and by his own appearance there for them with his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, he is, as it were, fitting up these mansions for their reception, whilst they are by his Spirit and grace fitting and preparing for the enjoyment of them.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

And if I go and prepare a place for you] Seeing I am going to prepare, and will prepare a place for you, of the truth of which you may be fully assured:

I will come again] Either by death, or in person, a second time, here on earth,

And receive you unto myself] I will take you up with me to heaven; I will receive you into glory:

That where I am, there ye may be also] And behold my glory, and be for ever with me, and never part more.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

And whither I go ye know] They might have known, at least, whither he was going, since he had spoke of his Father's house, and of his going to prepare a place for them there, and doubtless had some knowledge thereof, though very confused and imperfect:

And the way ye know] This also they might have known from some expressions of his, that the way to his Father's house lay through sufferings and death, in which way they also were to follow him to his kingdom and glory. Though these words may be read with an interrogation, *And whither I go do ye know? and the way do ye know?* which best agrees with Thomas's answer, and removes all appearance of contradiction between Christ's words and his.

5 ¶ Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

Thomas

(a) Zohar in Deut. fol. 113. 1. (b) Praefat. ad Segher Rosiel, fol. 2. 14 Nishmat Chayim, fol. 26. 2. & 27. 1.
(c) T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 75. 1. Nishmat Chayim, fol. 32. 2. Midrash Tillim in Galatin, l. 12. c. 6.

Thomas saith unto him, Lord] Who was one of his apostles, and here betrays his ignorance, as elsewhere his unbelief; and not only speaks for himself, but for the rest of the apostles, of whom he judged by himself; and who, it may be, might understand things better than himself, though their knowledge at present was but small:

We know not whither thou goest] Though he had but just told them of his Father's house, and of his going to prepare a place for them:

And how can we know the way?] For if we do not know the place, it is not reasonable to think we should know the way to it. Thomas seemed to have no other notion than that Christ was talking of some particular place in Judea, whither he was going, and of the road to it.

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way] Our Lord takes the opportunity of this discourse about the place he was going to, and the way unto it, more fully to instruct his disciples concerning himself, saying, *I am the way*; Christ is not merely the way, as he goes before his people as an example; or merely as a prophet, pointing out unto them, by his doctrine, the way of salvation; but he is the way of salvation itself, by his obedience and sacrifice; nor is there any other: he is the way of his Father's appointing, and which is entirely agreeable to the perfections of God, and suitable to the case and condition of sinners; he is the way to all the blessings of the covenant of grace; and he is the right way into a Gospel-church-state here; no one comes rightly into a church of Christ but by faith in him; and he is the way to heaven: he is entered into it himself by his own blood, and has opened the way to it through himself for his people: he adds,

And the truth] He is not only true, but truth itself: this may regard his person and character; he is the true God, and eternal life; truly and really man; as a Prophet he taught the way of God in truth; as a Priest, he is a faithful, as well as a merciful one, true and faithful to him that appointed him; and as a King, just and true are all his ways and administrations: he is the sum and substance of all the truths of the Gospel; they are all full of him, and center in him; and he is the truth of all the types and shadows, promises and prophecies of the Old Testament; they have all their accomplishment in him; and he is the true way, in opposition to all false ones of man's devising. And this phrase seems to be opposed to a notion of the Jews, that the law was

the true way of life, and who confined truth to the law. They have a saying (*d*), that מֹשֶׁה וְחֻמּוֹתָיו "Moses and his law are the truth;" this they make Korah and his company say in hell. That the law of Moses was truth, is certain; but it is too strong an expression to say of Moses himself, that he was truth; but well agrees with Christ, by whom grace and truth came, in opposition to Moses, by whom came the law: but when they say (*e*), הַיְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִיֵּשֶׁת "there is no truth but the law," they do not speak truth. More truly do they speak, when, in answer to that question, מִיֵּשֶׁת הַיְיָ "What is truth?" it is said, That he is the living God, and King of the world (*f*); characters that well agree with Christ.

And the life] Christ is the author and giver of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal; or he is the way of life, or the living way; in opposition to the law; which was so far from being the way of life, that it was the ministration of condemnation and death: he always, and ever will be the way; all in this way live, none ever die; and it is a way that leads to eternal life: and, to conclude all the epithets in one sentence, Christ is the true way to eternal life. It is added by way of explanation of him, as the way,

No man cometh unto the Father but by me] Christ is the only way of access unto the Father; there is no coming to God as an absolute God, nor upon the foot of the covenant of works, nor without a Mediator; and the only mediator between God and man is Christ; he introduces and presents the persons and services of his people to his Father, and gives them acceptance with him.

7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

If ye had known me] Christ having made mention of his Father's house, and of himself as the way thither, and the way of access to the Father, was willing to inform his disciples better concerning him before his departure from them; which he introduces, saying, *If ye had known me*; that is, more fully and perfectly; for that they knew Christ to be the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, and true Messiah, is certain, though they were not so thoroughly acquainted, as afterwards, with his person, power, and office:

Ye should have known my Father also] For the knowledge of the Father, and of Christ, go together;

(*d*) T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 74. 1. Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 22. 2. (*e*) T. Hieros. Rosh Hashanah, fol. 59. 3. Pirqat. Etra Rabbat, fol. 36. 2. (*f*) Ibid. Sanhedrin, fol. 18. 2.

gether; he that sees the one, sees the other; he that believes in the one, believes in the other; and the knowledge of both is necessary to eternal life; and as a person increases in the knowledge of the one, so of the other. The disciples had some knowledge of them both, but what was very small and obscure, in comparison of what they afterwards had:

And from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.] Some read these words, "henceforward ye shall know him, and see him;" that is, in a very short time, when the Spirit is poured down from on high upon you, and you have received the gifts of the Holy Ghost, you shall then have an enlarged knowledge both of me and my Father. Others render them, as an exhortation, "henceforward know ye him;" acknowledge the Father in all that I have done, believing that you see the Father in me, and in all my works; though they are rather to be considered as an assertion, declaring that they then had some knowledge of the Father; "and now ye know him, and, or because ye have seen him;" in me who am the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.

8. ¶ Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

Philip saith unto him, Lord.] Another of his disciples addresses him in a reverend and becoming manner, as Thomas before had done, calling him Lord, and saying to him,

Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.] He speaks in the name of them all, seems to own their ignorance of the Father, and expresses their desire of seeing him: *Shew us the Father;* it was a corporal sight of him he asked for; such a sight of the glory of God as Moses desired, and the elders of Israel had at mount Sinai; and signifies, that if this could be obtained, it would give them full satisfaction: *and it sufficeth us;* we shall be no more uneasy at thy departure from us; we shall have no doubt about thy Father's house, and the many mansions in it; or of thyself, as the way unto it, and of our everlasting abode with thee in it; we shall sit down easy and contented, and trouble thee no more with questions about this matter.

9. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you.] Conversing familiarly with you, instructing

you by my ministry, and performing so many miraculous works among you, for so long a time? See *Heb. v. 11, 12.* *And yet hast thou not known me, Philip?] Surely* you cannot be so ignorant as this comes to; as you have seen me with your bodily eyes, as a man, you must know that I am God by the doctrines I have taught you, and the miracles I have wrought among you; and

He that hath seen me.] Not with the eyes of his body, but with the eyes of his understanding; he that has beheld the perfections of the Godhead in me;

Hath seen the Father.] The perfections which are in him also; for the same that are in me are in him, and the same that are in him are in me: I am the very image of him, and am possessed of the same nature, attributes, and glory, that he is; so that he that sees the one, sees the other.

And how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?] Such a request is a needless one, and betrays great weakness and ignorance.

Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

Believest thou not that I am in the Father?] This surely is, as it must needs be, and ought to be, an article of your faith, that I am in the Father,

And the Father in me.] Phrases which are expressive of the sameness of nature in the Father and the Son; of the Son's perfect equality with the Father, since the Son is as much in the Father, as the Father is in the Son; and also of the personal distinction there is between them; for nothing with propriety can be said to be in itself. The Father must be distinct from the Son who is in him, and the Son must be distinct from the Father, in whom he is; the Father and Son, though of one and the same nature, cannot be one and the same person.

The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself.] The doctrines which I preach among you are a proof of what I assert, and to them I appeal; for these are not of myself, as man,

But the Father that dwelleth in me.] And so prove that I am truly God, of the same nature with my Father; that he is in me, and I in him; since they are such as none but the only-begotten, who is in the bosom of the Father, could ever have declared and made known unto you. Likewise, the works which I do, as man, I do not of myself; but

He

He doeth the works] For so this passage must be understood and supplied, in which Christ proceeds to another argument, taken from his works, proving the Father to be in him, and that he is in the Father, which is enlarged on in the next verse.

11 Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me] Take my word for the truth of this; you may assure yourselves that nothing is more certain; but if you will not believe upon my saying so, either believe for the sake of the doctrines I have preached unto you, which are such as never any mere man spoke, and which have been delivered in such a manner, and with such authority, as never were by man. Some copies read, by way of interrogation, and so the Ethiopic version; and the Vulgate Latin version reads, "believe ye not?"

Or else believe me for the very works' sake] Meaning his miraculous works, such as raising the dead, cleansing the lepers, causing the deaf to hear, and giving sight to the blind; and which were such as none but a divine person could ever perform.

12 ¶ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me] Having mentioned his miracles as proofs of his Deity, he assures his disciples, in order to comfort them under the loss of his bodily presence, that they should do the same, and greater works; for we are not to understand these words of every one that believes in Christ, of every private believer in him, but only of the apostles, and each of them, that were true believers in him: to whom he says,

The works that I do shall he do also] He shall raise the dead, heal all manner of diseases, and cast out devils; things which Christ gave his apostles power to do, when he first gave them a commission to preach the Gospel, and when he renewed and enlarged it; and which they did perform, not in their own name, and by their own power, but in the name, and by the power of Christ:

And greater works than these shall he do] Meaning, not greater in nature and kind, but more in number; for the apostles, in a long series of time, and course of years, went about preaching the

Gospel, not in Judea only, but in all the world; God also bearing them witness with signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, wherever they went: though perhaps by these greater works may be meant the many instances of conversion, which the apostles were instrumental in, and which were more in number than those which were under our Lord's personal ministry; besides, the conversion of a sinner is a greater work than any of the miracles of raising the dead, &c. for this includes in it all miracles: here we may see a sinner dead in trespasses and sins, quickened; one born blind, made to see; one who was deaf to the threatenings of the law, and to the charming voice of the Gospel, made to hear, so as to live; and one that had the spreading leprosy of sin all over him, cleansed from it by the blood of the Lamb: yea, though a miracle in nature is an instance and proof of divine power, yet the conversion of a sinner, which is a miracle in grace, is not only an instance of the power of God, and of the greatness of it, but of the exceeding greatness of it: and the rather one may be induced to give into this sense of the passage, since it is added, as a reason,

Because I go to my Father] And upon my ascension the Spirit will be given to you, which shall not only enable you to perform miracles, as proofs of your apostleship, and the doctrine you preach, but which shall powerfully attend the Gospel to the conversion of multitudes of souls.

13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name] Whether it be for assistance in preaching of the Gospel; or for the performance of miraculous operations in confirmation of it; or for success to attend it; or for any blessings whatsoever, whether for themselves or others:

That will I do] He does not say, that he would be a mediator between God and them, an advocate with the Father for them, and would intercede, and use his interest with him that it might be done, which would have been saying much, and all which he does; but he declares he will do it himself; which is a proof of his Deity, and an instance of his omnipotence:

That the Father may be glorified in the Son] This may be referred either to the petition, which must be made with this view, that the Father may be glorified by, or in the Son, in whose name it is put up, and for whose sake it is made; or to Christ's promise to do it; who in doing it, seeks not his own glory, at least not singly; but, as

the good of his people, to the glory of his heavenly Father.

14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

These words are much the same with the former, and have been thought, by some, to have crept into the text from the margin; though they seem rather to be repeated by Christ, the more to strengthen and confirm the faith of his disciples in this matter; that whatsoever they asked in his name, either calling upon it, he being equally the object of prayer with the Father, or making mention of it, pleading the merits of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; whatever was according to the will of God, was for his glory, and their real good, he would do it for them, as well when absent from them, as present with them.

15 ¶ If ye love me, keep my commandments.

If ye love me] Not that Christ doubted of the love of his disciples to him; but he argues from it to their observance of his precepts, seeing ye do love me; as all do who are born again, who have had any spiritual light of him, of his glory, suitableness, and fulness; who believe in him, and have received from him; who have had his love shed abroad in their hearts, having enjoyed communion with him, and know the relation he stands in to them: these love him above all others, and all of him, and that belong to him, unfeignedly, and in the sincerity of their souls, as did the disciples; and since they professed to love, and did love him, as they ought to do, he exhorts them, saying,

Keep my commandments] Christ is Lord over his people, as he is the creator and redeemer of them, and as he is an head and husband to them; and as such he has a right to issue out his commands, and enjoin a regard unto them; and these are peculiarly his, as distinct from, though not in opposition to, or to the exclusion of his Father's commands; such as the new commandment of loving one another, and the ordinances of baptism, and the Lord's supper, which are to be observed and kept as Christ has ordered them, constantly, in faith, and with a view to his glory.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

And I will pray the Father] Here Christ speaks as mediator, and promises his disciples that he would intercede for them with the Father; which is designed as an encouragement to them to ask for what they want in his name, and to comfort their

hearts, which were troubled at the news of his departure from them;

And he shall give you another comforter] This is no inconsiderable proof of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead: here is the Father prayed unto, the Son in human nature praying, and the Holy Ghost the Comforter prayed for; who is the gift of the Father, through the prevalent mediation of the Son, and is *another comforter*; distinct from the Messiah, to whom reference is here had. One of the names of the Messiah, with the Jews, is, מנחם (g) "a Comforter;" such an one Jesus had been to his disciples; and now he was about to leave them, and for their support under their sorrows, he promises to use his interest with his Father, that he would give them *another Comforter*; meaning the Spirit, who performs this his work and office, by taking of the things of Christ, and shewing them to his people; by shedding abroad the love of the Father, and of the Son, into their hearts; by opening and applying the precious promises of the Gospel to them; by being a Spirit of adoption in them; and by abiding with them as the seal, earnest, and pledge of their future glory; and with this view Christ promises to pray for him,

That he may abide with you for ever] Not a few years only, as I have done, but as long as you live; and with all those that shall succeed you in the work of the ministry, and with the church, and all true believers unto the end of the world: this is a proof of the saints' final perseverance. When we consider these words, in connexion with the preceding exhortation to keep the commands of Christ, and as an encouragement so to do, it brings to mind a saying of R. Eliezer ben Jacob (b), "He that does one commandment gets for himself, מן השמים נא תפארתו, the very word here used, *one advocate*, or comforter; and he that transgresses one command, gets for himself one accuser." But though the word signifies both an advocate and a comforter, the latter seems to be the meaning of it here, as being more suited to the disconsolate condition of the disciples.

17 *Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*

Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive] These words explain who is meant by the Comforter, *even the Spirit of truth*; the true Spirit of God, the dictator of the scriptures of truth, who

(g) T. Hierol. Beracot, fol. 5. 1. T. Bab. Sacherim, fol. 98. 2. Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2. (b) Pirke Aboi, c. 4. §. 11.

who leads men into the truths of the Gospel, confirms them in them, and gives boldness and freedom to own, and confess them before men:

Whom the world cannot receive] The men of the world, who are as they came into the world, carnal and natural men, can neither receive the Spirit, nor the things of the Spirit, the truths and doctrines of the Gospel; they can neither receive them into their understandings, nor into their affections; and indeed, because they cannot understand them, therefore they do not love them, but despise and hate them:

Because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him] The world, and the men of it, can neither see him with their bodily eyes, because he is a Spirit; nor know him with their understandings, because he is the Spirit of truth, which they are ignorant of, for want of a spiritual discerning.

But ye know him] As a Spirit of illumination, regeneration, and conversion:

For he dwelleth with you] He is an inhabitant in your hearts, he has taken up his residence in you as his temples:

And shall be in you] As a comforter, when I am gone from you; and as a Spirit of truth to guide you into all truth, to stand by you, and assist you in preaching it, and to enable you to bear a faithful and glorious testimony for it.

18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

I will not leave you comfortless] Greek, *orphans*, or *fatherless*. Christ stands in the relation of a Father to his people, and they are his children, his spiritual seed and offspring; and so the disciples might fear, that as Christ was going from them, they should be left as children without a father, in a very desolate and comfortless condition: to support them against these fears, Christ promises that he would not leave them thus, at least not long:

I will come to you] In a very short time, as he did; for on the third day he rose again from the dead, and appeared to them, which filled them with great joy. So among the Jews, disciples, and the world too, are represented as fatherless, when their doctors and wise men are removed by death. Says R. Aba (1), and so sometimes others, concerning R. Simeon ben Jochai, "Wo to the world when thou shalt go out of it, wo to the generation that shall be in the world when thou shalt remove from them, *וְהָיָה עוֹלָם בְּלִי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן יוֹחָי* and they shall be left fatherless by thee." And in another place (2): "Afterwards R. Akiba went out

"and cried, and his eyes flowed with water, and he said, Wo Rabbi, wo Rabbi, for the world is left, *עוֹלָם בְּלִי אָבִי* fatherless by thee."

19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more] The men of the world now see me with their bodily eyes, which is all the sight they have of me; and this they will be deprived of in a very little time; they will see me no more until the time that I shall come in the clouds of heaven to judge the world; and then every eye shall see me:

But ye see me] Ye see me now, and shall see me after my resurrection, as they did; for then he appeared alive, and conversed with them for forty days; and when he ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God, they saw him by faith crowned with glory and honour; and will see him as he is when he comes a second time to take them to himself in glory.

Because I live, ye shall live also] Christ lives as God, as man, and as mediator: as God, he lives the same life his Father does, partaking of the same nature, and possessing the same perfections; so he lived from everlasting, and will live to everlasting: as man, he lived first a private, and then a public life, attended with meanness, reproaches, sorrows, and sufferings; a life which was filled up with acts of devotion and piety to God, and with doing good to the bodies and souls of men; he lived in all obedience to the law of God, and at last endured the penalty of that law, in the room and stead of his people; when his life was taken away for a while, and then taken up by him again; and now, as man, he lives, and lives for evermore. As mediator, he has his life from the Father, which is dependent upon him, by whom he was set up in an office-capacity from everlasting; and as such will live to everlasting, to see the travail of his soul, the fruit of his sufferings, to make intercession for his people, and to rule until all enemies are made his footstool. And his people *live also*, which is to be understood, not of the preservation of his disciples from dying with him, when he died; for then it should rather have been said, *because I die, ye shall live*: nor of the continuance of their natural life in this world; for the saints are not to live always here; nor do they desire it, nor is it proper they should; death is for their advantage; it is a blessing to them. Though these words may be understood of a corporal life, which they shall live after the resurrection; for though they die, they shall live again, and never die more; they shall not only live and reign with Christ a thousand years, but to all eternity. They also

(1) Zohar in Num. fol. 96. 3. & in Lev. fol. 42. 3. & in Exod. fol. 10. 3. & 28. 3. (2) Midrash Hannealam in Zohar in Gen. fol. 65. 4.

live a spiritual life now; a life of grace and holiness from Christ; a life of faith on him, and sometimes of communion with him, and desire to live to his honour and glory; and shall hereafter live an eternal life of perfection and pleasure with Father, Son, and Spirit for evermore. Now between these two lives, the life of Christ, and of his people, there is a close connexion; the one is dependent on the other, and secured by the other: *because I live, ye shall live also*; the spiritual life of a believer is from Christ, and is maintained by him; the same which is in the head, is in the members; yea, it is not so much they that live, as Christ that lives in them, and therefore their life can never be lost; it is bound up in the bundle of life with Christ, and is hid safe and secure with him in God, and so out of the reach both of men and devils. The corporal life of the saints after death, in the resurrection-morn, springs from, and is secured by the life of Christ: his resurrection from the dead is the pattern and pledge of theirs; he undertook to raise them from the dead, and will do it; as sure as his dead body is raised and lives, so sure shall theirs; their bodies, as well as their souls, are united to Christ; and by virtue of this union, which death does not, and cannot dissolve, they shall be raised and live again. They are in Christ whilst they are dead; and because they are *the dead in Christ*, they shall *rise first*. Their eternal life is in the hands of Christ, and when he, who is the true God, and their eternal life, shall appear, they shall appear with him in glory.

20 At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

At that day ye shall know] The things they should know, or the objects of knowledge are,

That I am in my Father] In his bosom, in union with him, partaker of the same nature, perfections, and glory with him, and equal to him:

And ye in me] That they were in union with him as the branches in the vine, and as the members are in the head, and how they were loved in him, chosen in him, righteous in him, risen with him, and made to sit together in heavenly places in him:

And I in you] Formed in their hearts, living in them, dwelling in them, as in his temples, and filling them with grace and glory. The knowledge of these things premised, designs, a more clear and distinct knowledge of them; something of them was known already, but not so perfectly as should be hereafter: and this does not suppose that these unions between the Father and Christ, and between Christ and his people, shall then begin to be; for as the union between the Father

and the Son, is as eternal as themselves lives; those union between Christ and his people, as he is the head and representative of them, is as early as his investiture with the office of a mediator, and his suretyship-engagements for them, which were from eternity; and are the ground, and foundation of his being in them, and they in him in effectual vocation: nor does it suggest that they shall begin to be known; only that they shall be known in a more perfect manner: the time when this will be, is *at that day*; meaning either when he should live in the body again, be raised from the dead, when he should be declared to be the Son of God with power, when it would appear that he had the same power with the Father, by raising himself from the dead, and when he would rise as a public head representing them, for their justification, and they should see themselves justified and discharged in him; or the day of Pentecost when *the spirit of truth*, he promises to pray for, should come to them in an extraordinary manner, and lead them into the knowledge of these things; or the last day, the resurrection-morn, when, by virtue of union to Christ, the saints shall rise and live with him for ever, and shall have a perfect knowledge of these several unions; see *John xviii. 21, 23, 24*:

21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them] He that has not merely the external revelation of them in the Bible; but has them written on his heart, by the finger of the Spirit of God, and keeps them under the influence of grace and strength received from him:

He it is that loveth me] Others may talk of loving Christ, but this is the man that truly does love him; for his observance of Christ's commands is a proof and evidence that he loves him not in word only, but in deed and in truth: and to encourage souls to love and obedience, Christ adds,

He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father] Not that love to Christ is the cause, condition, or motive of the Father's love to his people; nor does his love to them begin when they begin to love Christ; but this expression denotes some further and greater manifestation of the Father's love to such persons, and shews how grateful to the Father are love and obedience to the Son:

And I will love him] Which must be understood in the same manner; Christ does not begin to love his people when they begin to love and obey him; their

their love and obedience to him, spring from his love to them; which love of his towards them was from everlasting; but this phrase designs a clearer discovery of his love to them, which passeth knowledge; and some fresh mark and token of his affection for them; and which is explained in the next clause:

And will manifest myself to him] Not in a visible way, or in a corporeal form, as he did to his disciples after his resurrection; but in a spiritual manner, as when he makes himself known to his people in ordinances, and favours them with communion with him, and they see his beauty, his fulness, his grace and righteousness, his power, and his glory.

22 Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot] This was Judas Lebbeus whose surname was Thaddæus, the same with Jude the apostle, the author of the Epistle which bears his name; and is said to be not Iscariot, to distinguish him from the betrayer. The question put by him,

Lord, how is it] *מָה הַיְשָׁר*, which answers to *מָה הַיְשָׁר* or *מָה הַיְשָׁר* or *מָה הַיְשָׁר*, with the Talmudists, "What is this thou sayest?" What is the meaning of it? How can it be? or, What is the reason of it?

That thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not unto the world?] Arises either from ignorance of what Christ was speaking, imagining he meant a spectre, or some apparition of himself after his death, which should be visible to his disciples, and not to others; and how this could be, he wanted to know; or from that national prejudice which Judas and the rest of the apostles had given into, of a temporal kingdom of the Messiah, the glory of which should be visible to all the world; and therefore he wonders that he should talk of the manifestation of himself only to some; or from an honest hearty desire that the glory of Christ might not be confined to a few only; but that the whole world might see it, and be filled with it; or rather from his modesty, and the sense he had of his own unworthiness, and of the rest of the apostles, to have such a peculiar manifestation of Christ to them, when they were no more deserving of it than others: the question is put by him with admiration and astonishment; and as not being able to give, or think of any other reason of such a procedure, but the amazing grace of Christ, his free favour and sovereign will and pleasure.

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and

my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

Jesus answered and said unto him] This answer is returned, and these words are spoken, for the further confirmation and explanation of what was before said:

If a man love me, he will keep my words] By his words are meant not his doctrines, but his ordinances; the same with his commandments, *ψ. 21.* which he has said, ordered, and commanded to be observed, and which are observed by such who truly love him, and that from a principle of love to him, and with a view to his glory: and for the encouragement of such persons as before, he says,

And my Father will love him] Which is to be understood not of the love of the Father, as in his own heart, which is not taken up in time, but was in him from all eternity; nor of the first discovery of it to his people, but of greater manifestations of it to them, and a quicker sense of it in their hearts, and also of some other effects of it, to be enjoyed by them in an higher manner; such as larger measures of grace, more communion with him here, and eternal honour and glory hereafter:

And we will come unto him] I, who am now going away, and my Father to whom I am going, and the holy Spirit, the Comforter, I have promised to pray for: hence a proof of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, of a Trinity of persons, of there being neither more nor fewer than three; since neither more nor less can be collected from the context; and of their distinct personality, or it could not be said with any propriety, *we* each of us *will come unto him*; not locally and visibly, but spiritually, by affording our gracious and comfortable presence, the continuance of which is promised next:

And make our abode with him] Which denotes habitation; for the saints are the dwelling places or temples of the living God, Father, Son and Spirit; and the constancy and perpetuity of their residence in them, not as a wayfaring man but always, though this may not be always discerned by believers; and is a wonderful instance of the grace and condescension of God to dwell on earth with sinful men; and a far greater one it is, than if the most mighty potentate on earth should take up his abode in a poor despicable cottage, with the meanest of his subjects.

24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings] These words may have respect both to external professors

professors of religion, who being destitute of true love to Christ, though they outwardly observe his ordinances and commands; yet inasmuch as this does not spring from a principle of love to him, and is done only to be seen of men, or to obtain life for themselves, may be said, not to keep his words or commands, because they do not keep them aright; and to the profane world, who as they have no affection to Christ, pay no regard to any orders or ordinances of his: and they may be considered as having in them a reason or argument, justifying the conduct of Christ, in manifesting himself to his disciples, and not unto the world; as the following words give a reason why the Father takes so much notice of, comes and makes his abode with such as keep the words of Christ: and, or

For the word which you hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me] That is, it is not only mine, but my Father's also; it is not mine as man; it is not a scheme of things of my own devising; it is not from earth, but from heaven; my Father has a concern in it, and therefore regards such who hear, receive, and keep it. And this is said by him partly to engage a greater regard and attention to his word, his truths, and ordinances, by his disciples; and to expose and aggravate the sin of those who despised and rejected them; since it was not barely casting contempt on him, but on his Father likewise.

25 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

These things have I spoken unto you] Concerning his Father, and his Father's house, and the way to both; concerning his being in the Father, and the Father in him; concerning keeping his commandments, and the advantages and benefits following upon it:

Being yet present with you] Which is a strong intimation that in a little time he should not be present with them; and that whilst he was present with them, he was desirous of saying such things to them, in a brief compendious manner, as they were able to bear; which might be of future use and instruction to them.

26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost] Before spoken of *v. 16.* for whom Christ promised to pray the Father that he might be given to them. The word used there, as here, signifies an *Advocate*,

and is so rendered *1. John ii. 1.* a patron, one that pleads and defends the cause of another, before kings and princes; so the Jewish writers (*1*) use the word *וִּפְרָא* the same with *וּפְרָאנִי*, here, and give this as the sense of it: and which agrees well enough with the work and office of the Spirit of God, who has promised to the apostles to speak in them and for them, when they should be brought before kings and governors for Christ's sake; and would so thoroughly plead his cause and theirs, as to convince the world of sin, righteousness and judgment; and who acts the part of an intercessor, or advocate, for private believers, in prayer to the King of kings: but inasmuch as it also signifies a *Comforter*, and this being agreeable to the present condition of the apostles, as before observed; it may be most proper to retain that sense of it here, who is explained to be the *Holy Ghost*; which is a more clear and explicit account of him than before, and very distinctly points out the third person in the Trinity, who is in his nature holy, equally with the Father and Son, and the author of holiness in all the saints:

Whom the Father will send in my name] The mission of the Spirit is here ascribed to the Father, but not to the exclusion of the Son, who is also said to send him, chapter xv. 26. and xvi. 7. which was not so proper to be mentioned here, because he speaks of his being sent, in *his name*; that is, at his request, through his mediation and intercession, in his room and stead, acting the same part, and bearing the same name of an Advocate or Comforter, and for the glory and honour of his name: which act of sending does not suppose any local motion, which cannot agree with an infinite and immense Spirit; nor inferiority in him to the other two persons, since he who is sent by Christ, and in his name, is also the sender of Christ; but it denotes the joint consent and agreement of Father, Son, and Spirit, in this affair:

He shall teach you all things] This is the proper work and business of the Spirit, to teach, interpret, and explain all things which Christ had said to them; to make them more plain and easy to their understandings; to instruct them in all things necessary to salvation, and to be known by them, that they might teach them to others:

And bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you] Which through inattention, or want of understanding in them, had slipped their minds, and were forgotten by them. This accounts for it, how the Evangelists, some years after the death of Christ, at different times and places, and without consulting each other, could

(1) Maimon. & Bartenora in Pirke Abot, c. 4. §. 11.

commit to writing the life, actions, sayings, and sermons of Christ, with all the minute circumstances attending them.

27 ¶ Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Peace I leave with you] Christ being about to die and leave his disciples, makes his last will and testament, and as the best legacy he could leave them, bequeaths peace unto them;

My peace I give unto you] He left the Gospel of peace with them, to be preached by them to all the world; which is a declaration and publication of peace made by his blood; is a means of reconciling the minds of men to God and Christ, to the truths, ordinances, and people of Christ; of relieving and giving peace to distressed minds; and which shews the way to eternal peace: and as Christ had kept his disciples in peace one with another, so he left them in peace; and left orders with them to maintain it, one among another: but what seems chiefly designed here, is peace with God, which Christ is the sole author of; he was appointed in the counsel and covenant of peace to effect it; he became incarnate with that view, and did procure it by his sufferings and death; and as it was published by angels, when he came into the world, he left it, and gave it to his disciples when he was going out of it: or else that peace of conscience is meant, which follows upon the former, which arises from the sprinklings of the blood of Christ, and from a comfortable view, by faith, of an interest in his justifying righteousness, and is enjoyed in a way of believing, and commonly in the use of ordinances: *leaving it* supposes that Christ was about to leave his disciples, but would not leave them comfortless; he leaves a comforter with them, and bequeaths peace unto them as his last legacy: *giving it*, shews that it is not to be acquired by any thing that man can do, but is a pure free-grace-gift of Christ; and which being given as his legacy, is irrevocable, for the allusion is to the making of a will or testament when persons are about to die: though some have thought it refers to the custom of wishing peace, health and prosperity among the Jews; but Christ does not say, *Peace be to you*; which was the more usual form of salutation among them, and which was used by them when they met, and not at parting; especially we have no instance of such a form as here used, by dying persons taking their leaves of their relations and friends. It must indeed be owned that the phrase, *to give peace*, is with them the same as to salute, or wish health

and prosperity. Take two or three of their rules as instances of it; "Whoever knows his friend, that he is used, *ליתן לו שלום* (*m*) "to give him peace;" he shall prevent him with peace (that is, salute him first) as it is said, *Seek peace and pursue it*; but if he gives it to him, and he does not return it, he shall be called a robber." Again, "*(n)* A man may not go into the house of a stranger, on his feast-day, *ליתן לו שלום* "to give peace unto him, (or salute him;)" if he finds him in the street, he may give it to him with a low voice, and his head hanging down." Once (*o*) more, "A man *ליתן לו שלום* "may not give peace to," or salute his master, nor return peace to him in the way that they give it to friends, and they return it to one another." Likewise it must be owned, that when they saluted persons of distinction, such as princes, nobles, and doctors, they repeated the word *peace* (*p*), though never to any strangers; however, certain it is, that it was another sort of peace which Christ left, and gave to his disciples, than what the Jews were wont to give, or wish to one another;

Not as the world giveth, give I unto you] The peace Christ gives is true, solid, and substantial; the peace the world, the men, and things of it give, is a false one; and whilst they cry, *Peace, peace, sudden destruction is at hand*; the peace of the world is at best but an external one, but the peace Christ is the giver of, is internal; the peace the world affords is a very transient, unstable, and short-lived one, but the peace of Christ is lasting and durable; the peace of the world will not support under the troubles of it, but the peace which Christ gives, cheerfully carries his people through all the difficulties and exercises of this life. And as these differ in kind, so likewise in the manner of giving, and in the persons to whom they are given; the world gives peace in words only, Christ in deed; the world gives feignedly, Christ heartily; the world gives it for its own advantage, Christ for his peoples sake; the world gives its peace to the men of it, to the ungodly, none to the godly, whom it hates; Christ gives his, not to the wicked, for there is no peace to them, but to the saints, the excellent in the earth. Wherefore says Christ,

Let not your heart be troubled] At my departure from you, since I leave such a peace with you:

Neither let it be afraid] At the dangers you may be exposed unto, and the troubles you may be exercised

(m) T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 6. 2. 2.

(n) T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 62. 1. Maimon. Obede Coehabim, c. 10. §. 5.

(o) Maimon. Talmud Terah, c. 5. §. 5.

(p) T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 62. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Melacin, c. 10. §. 12.

exercised with; for in the midst of them all, *in me ye shall have peace.*

28 Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come *again* unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

Ye have heard how I said unto you] Christ had not only told his disciples that he should depart from them in a little time, but also that he should return again to them, and comfort them with his presence, and receive them to himself, to be with him in his Father's house for ever: and this he again suggests.

I go away, and come again unto you] So that they had not so much reason to be troubled and afraid, as they were: had he only said to them that he should go away, without giving any hint of his coming again, they might well have been uneasy. What made the friends of the apostle Paul so sorrowful at his departure, was most of all, because he had signified to them they should *see his face no more*; but Christ assured his disciples that in a little time they should see him again, to their unspeakable joy and comfort:

If ye loved me, ye would rejoice] Not but that the disciples did truly love Christ, and their concern for the loss of his bodily presence is a proof of it; nor was their love unknown to him, nor does he call it in question, only corrects it, or rather uses means to increase it, to draw it forth aright, that it might move and run in a proper channel; they loved him, and therefore were unwilling to part with him: but this was not a pure expression of love to him, it shewed too much a regard to themselves, than to the object loved; whereas had they considered things aright, since it was to his greater advantage to remove, they should rather have discovered a willingness to it, and have rejoiced at it; this would have shewn pure love and unbiassed affection to him: two reasons our Lord gives why they should have rejoiced at his remove; one is,

Because I said, I go unto the Father] Who was not only his, but their Father also; at whose right hand he was to sit, an honour which no mere creature ever had; where he was to be glorified and exalted above all created beings: and besides his glorification would secure and bring on theirs; as sure as he lived in glory, so sure should they; yea, they should immediately sit down in heavenly places in him as their head and representative, and therefore had good reason to rejoice at his going away: the other is,

For my Father is greater than I] Not with respect to the divine nature, which is common to them both, and in which they are both one; and the Son is equal to the Father, having the self-same essence, perfections, and glory: nor with respect to personality, the Son is equally a divine person, as the Father is, though the one is usually called the first, the other the second person; yet this priority is not of nature, which is the same in both; nor of time, for the one did not exist before the other; nor of causality, for the Father is not the cause of the Son's existence; nor of dignity, for the one has not any excellency which is wanting in the other; but of order and manner of operation: these words are to be understood, either with regard to the human nature, in which he was going to the Father, this was prepared for him by the Father, and strengthened and supported by him, and in which he was made a little lower than the angels, and consequently must be in it inferior to his Father; or with regard to his office as Mediator, in which he was the Father's servant, was set up and sent forth by him, acted under him, and in obedience to him, and was now returning to give an account of his work and service. Or rather with regard to his present state, which was a state of humiliation: he was attended with many griefs and sorrows, and exposed to many enemies, and about to undergo an accursed death; whereas his Father was in the most perfect happiness and glory, and so in this sense *greater*, that is, more blessed and glorious than he; for this is not a comparison of natures, or of persons, but of states and conditions: now he was going to the Father to partake of the same happiness and glory with him, to be glorified with himself, with the same glory he had with him before the foundation of the world; wherefore on this account, his disciples ought to have rejoiced, and not have mourned.

29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

And now I have told before it come to pass] This is a strong proof of his true and proper Deity, for none but the omniscient God can tell of things before they come to pass; this is peculiar to him, and distinguishes him from the gods of the Gentiles; see *Isa.* xli. 22, 23. and chap. xlv. 21. and xlv. 9, 10.

That when it is come to pass, ye might believe] That is, that when he was removed from them, and gone to his Father, they might then believe that he was truly God, the Son of God, the promised Messiah; and that he was then in glory, and at the right hand of God.

30. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

Hereafter I will not talk much with you] Meaning before his death; for after his resurrection he talked much with them, about the things pertaining to the kingdom of God; being seen of them and conversing with them, for the space of forty days; *not much*, he says, chiefly what is delivered in the two next chapters: the design of this was, to observe to them that his time of departure was near at hand, and to quicken their attention to what he did say to them; since they could not expect to hear him long, or much more from him; he would be otherwise engaged;

For the prince of this world cometh] By the prince of this world, is meant the devil; why he is so called, see note on chapter xii. 31. the reason why Christ chooses to use this circumlocution, rather than to say Satan or the devil cometh; is partly to point out what a powerful adversary he had, and was about to engage with; and partly to observe to his disciples, what they must expect from the world, even hatred and persecution; since Satan was the prince of it, and had such powerful influence over the minds of the men of it. When it is said that he *cometh*, it is to be understood of his coming to Christ; though it is not expressed, and that with an intent agreeable to his character, as a thief, to kill and to destroy; and not of his coming merely by Judas, into whom he had already entered; and had put it into his heart to betray him; and by the armed soldiers, who would accompany him to apprehend him; and by the chief priests, rulers, and people of the Jews, who with united voices would cry *Crucify him, crucify him*; nor only invisibly by his angels, his principalities and powers, he was now employing in different ways, to bring about his purposes; but of his coming himself personally, and visibly: as he visibly appeared to Christ in the wilderness, tempting him, where he left him for a season; so this season or opportunity being come, he takes it, and visibly appears to him in the garden, where a sharp agony and combat was between them; what success he had in this conflict, is next mentioned:

And hath nothing in me] Or as some copies read it, "shall find nothing in me;" or as others, "hath nothing to find in me;" Christ had no sin in him, which can be said of none but him. The Jews say (q), that *Samael*, by whom they meant the devil, when he wrestled with Jacob, *he* could not find any iniquity in him,"

(q) Tzeror Hammor, fol. 44: 2.

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he had committed; but this is only true of Jacob's antitype: for though his emissaries sought diligently for it; they could find none in him; though he had sin upon him, he had none in him; the sins of his people were imputed to him, but he had no sin inherent in him; hence, though he *the Messiah was cut off*, according to Dan. ix. 26. *but not for himself*; which by the Septuagint is rendered *ἐν ἑαυτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν αἰτία*, "but there is no judgment, or condemnation in him;" that is, no cause of condemnation; which agrees with what is here said: though the accuser of men sought to have something against him, to accuse him of, he could find none; some pretences indeed were made, and charges brought, but could not be made good, inasmuch that the judge himself said, *I find no fault at all*: so that the devil had no power over him, no rightful power, nor any but what he had by permission, nor indeed did he prevail over him; for though, according to the first prophecy of the Messiah, Satan bruised the heel of Christ; yet Christ bruised his head, destroyed him and his works, spoiled him, and his principalities and powers: whence it appears that the death of Christ was not owing to any sin of his own, for he had none, nor could any be found in him; nor to the superior power of the devil over him; he submitted to death, not through the power of Satan over him, and complied with all the circumstances leading to it, not out of fear of him, but in love to his Father, and obedience to his command; as is clear from the following verse.

31. But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

But that the world may know] Not the wicked and unbelieving world, but the world of God's elect, such as are brought to believe in Christ:

That I love the Father] Christ must needs love the Father, as being of the same nature and essence with him, and as standing in the relation of a Son to him; he loved all that the Father loves, and approved of all his purposes, counsels, and determinations, concerning himself and the salvation of his people; and therefore he voluntarily laid down his life for them:

And as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do] As a Son is obedient to a Father, so was Christ in all things obedient to the commands of his heavenly Father, in preaching the Gospel, obeying the law, and suffering death; all which he did and suffered, as the Father gave commandment to him, as man and mediator; and that it

4 D

might

might fully appear how much he loved his Father, and agreed with him in all his designs of grace; how much his will was resigned to his, and what respect he paid to whatever he said or ordered; he said to his disciples,

Arise, let us go hence] Not from the passover, or the supper, for the passover was not as yet, and the Lord's supper was not instituted; nor in order to go to mount Olivet, or to the garden, where Judas and his armed men would be to meet him, and lay hold on him, as is generally thought; but from Bethany, where he and his disciples now were, in order to go to Jerusalem and keep the passover, institute the supper, and then surrender himself into the hands of his enemies, and die for the sins of his people: for between this and the sermon in the following chapters, was the Lord's supper celebrated; when Christ having mentioned the fruit of the vine, he should drink new with his disciples in his Father's kingdom, he very pertinently enters upon the discourse concerning the vine and branches, with which the next chapter begins: the phrase is Jewish; so R. Jose and R. Chiyah, say to one another as they sat upon the passover, *Arise, and let us go hence* (r).

CHAP. XV.

In this chapter the union of Christ and his members, are described under the parable of a vine, &c. 1-18. He exhorteth them to keep his commandments, &c. 9-12. Sheweth his love to them by laying down his life, &c. 13. Telleth them they are his chosen, &c. 14-17. Comforteth them against the hatred of the world, &c. 18-20. and leaveth the Jews without excuse, &c. 21-25. and saith, that the holy Ghost beareth witness of him, &c. 26, 27.

I AM the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

I am the true vine] The fruit of which he had been just speaking of at supper with his disciples; and then informs them, that he himself is the vine from whence that fruit must be expected, which should be partook of by them in his Father's kingdom; for though Christ may be compared to a vine for its tenderness, weakness, and being subject to cuttings and prunings; all which may express his outward meanness in his birth, parentage, and education, which exposed him to the contempt of men; the weakness of the human nature in itself, his being encompassed with the infirmities of his people, and his sufferings and death for their sakes; yet he is rather called so with respect to his fruitfulness: for as the vine is a fruitful tree, brings forth and bears fruit in

clusters, so Christ, as man and mediator, is full of grace and truth, of all spiritual blessings, and exceeding great and precious promises; from him comes the wine of divine love, of Gospel-truths and Gospel-ordinances; the various blessings of grace, and the joys of heaven, which are the best wine, reserved by him till last: Christ is the true vine; not that he is really and literally so, without a figure; but he is, as the Syriac renders it, *the vine of truth*. Just as Israel is called "a noble vine, wholly a right seed," *Jer. ii. 21.* right genuine "seed;" or, as the Septuagint render it, *a vine, bringing forth fruit, wholly true*; to which the allusion may be here. Christ is the noble vine, the most excellent of vines, wholly a right seed, in opposition to, and distinction from, the wild and unfruitful, or degenerate plant of a strange vine: to him agree all the properties of a right and real vine; he really and truly communicates life, sap, juice, nourishment, and fruitfulness to the several branches which are in him.

The metaphor Christ makes use of was well known to the Jews; for not only the Jewish church is often compared to a vine, but the Messiah too, according to them; thus the Targumist explains the phrase in *Psal. lxxx. 15.* *the branch, thou madest strong for thyself, of the king Messiah*; and indeed, by comparing it with *Ps. 117.* it seems to be the true sense of the passage (a). The Cabalistic doctors say (b), that the Shekinah is called, *the vine*; see *Gen. xlix. 11.* where the Jews observe (c), the king Messiah is so called. The Jews (d) say, there was a golden vine that stood over the gate of the temple, and it was set upon props; and whoever offered a loaf, or a grape, or a cluster, (that is, a piece of gold to the temple, in the form of either of these) brought it, and hung it upon it. And of this vine also Josephus (e) makes mention, as being in Herod's temple; of which he says, that it was over the doors (of the temple), under the edges of the wall, having clusters hanging down from it on high, which filled spectators with wonder, as for the largeness of it, so for the art with which it was made. And elsewhere he says (f), the inward door in the porch was all covered with gold, and the whole wall about it; and it had over it golden vines, from whence hung clusters as big as the statue of a man: now whether our Lord may refer to this, being near the temple, and in

(a) Viti, R. Moslem Haderian in Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. verb. 1. 9. c. 4. (b) Zohar in Exod. fol. 70. c. 2. de Cabala demerata, par. 1. p. 241. (c) Zohar in Gen. fol. 27. c. 3. (d) Misa. Middot, c. 3. §. 8. T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 90. 2. & Tamid, fol. 29. 1. 9. (e) Antiq. 4. 15. c. 11. §. 3. Vid. l. 14. c. 3. 1. (f) De bello Jud. l. 5. c. 5. §. 4.

(r) Zohar in Exod. fol. 74. 2.

view of it, and point to it, and call himself *the true vine*, in distinction from it, which was only the representation of one; or whether he might take occasion, from the sight of a real vine, to compare himself to one, may be considered; since it was usual with Christ upon sight, or mention of natural things, to take the opportunity of treating of spiritual ones: though it may be rather this discourse of the vine and branches might be occasioned by his speaking of the fruit of the vine, at the time he eat the passover, and instituted the ordinance of the supper.

And my Father is the husbandman] Or vine-dresser. So God is called by Philo the Jew (g), *vine-dresser*, *אֵלֶּיךָ*, "a good husbandman;" and the same the Targumist says of the Word of the Lord (h), "And my Word shall be unto them, *אֵלֶּיךָ* "as a good husbandman." Now Christ says this of his Father, both with respect to himself, the vine, and with respect to the branches that were in him: he was the husbandman to him; he planted the vine of his human nature, and filled it with all the graces of the Spirit; he supported it, upheld it, and made it strong for himself, for the purposes of his grace, and for his own glory; and took infinite delight in it, being to him a pleasant plant, a plant of renown. The concern this husbandman has with the branches, is expressed in the following verse.

2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit] There are two sorts of branches in Christ the vine; the one sort are such who have only an historical faith in him, believe but for a time, and are removed; they are such who only profess to believe in him, as Simon Magus did; are in him by profession only; they submit to outward ordinances, become church-members, and so are reckoned to be in Christ, being in a church-state, as the churches of Judea and Thessalonica, and others, are said, in general, to be in Christ, though it is not to be thought that every individual person in these churches were truly and savingly in him. These branches are unfruitful ones; what fruit they seemed to have, withers away, and proves not to be genuine fruit: what fruit they bring forth is to themselves, and not to the glory of God, being none of the fruits of his spirit and grace: and such branches the husbandman *taketh away*; removes them from that sort of being

which they had in Christ. By some means or another he discovers them to the saints to be what they are; sometimes he suffers persecution to arise because of the word, and these men are quickly offended, and depart of their own accord; or they fall into erroneous principles, and set up for themselves, and separate from the churches of Christ; or they become guilty of scandalous enormities, and so are removed from their fellowship by excommunication; or if neither of these should be the case, but these tares should grow together with the wheat till the harvest, the angels will be sent forth, who will gather out of the kingdom of God all that offend and do iniquity, and cast them into a furnace of fire, as branches withered, and fit to be burnt.

And every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit] These are the other sort of branches, who are truly and savingly in Christ; such as are rooted in him; to whom he is the green fir-tree, from whom all their fruit is found; who are filled by him with all the fruits of his spirit, grace, and righteousness. These are purged or pruned, chiefly by afflictions and temptations, which are as needful for their growth and fruitfulness, as the pruning and cutting of the vines are for theirs; and though these are sometimes sharp, and never joyous, but grievous, yet they are attended with the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and so the end of bringing forth more fruit is answered; for it is not enough that a believer exercise grace, and perform good works for the present, but these must remain; or he must be constant herein, and still bring forth fruit; and add one virtue to another, that it may appear he is not barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ, in whom he is implanted. These different acts of the vine-dresser *taking away* some branches, and *purging* others, are expressed by the Mishic doctors (i); by *חֲתוּכָה* and *קַטְוָה*. The former, the commentators (k) say, signifies to cut off the branches that are withered and perished, and are good for nothing; and the latter signifies the pruning of the vine when it has a superfluity of branches, or these extend themselves too far, when some are left, and others are taken off.

3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

These words being inserted in the discourse concerning the vine and branches, and the pruning and purging them to make them fruitful, are thought, by the learned Dr Lightfoot, to be an allusion to the law in *Lev. xix. 23*, by which

(g) Leg. Allegor. l. 1. p. 48

(h) Targum in Prov. 11. 4.

(i) Mish. Shevith, c. 2. §. 3.

(k) Maaseh, &c. Bava nora in ibid.

the fruit of trees, for the first three years, were accounted uncircumcised or unclean, and in the fourth year fit for use; concerning which the Talmudists have a whole tract, called *Orlá*; the apostles having enjoyed the ministry of Christ, and been his disciples about such a time. Though the *now* seems to refer to the removal, and taking away of that withered and unfruitful branch, Judas. Christ, in a former chapter, had told his disciples, that they were *clean*, but *not all*, because the betrayer was among them; but he being discovered by Christ, and ordered by him to be gone, went out from among them about his wicked design; and now Christ could say of them all, that they were *clean*: which may be understood of their regeneration and sanctification, in which their hearts were sprinkled with clean water; were washed with the washing of regeneration; had their hearts purified by faith in the blood of Christ, and had pure principles of grace formed in their souls; of all which the Gospel of Christ was the instrumental means: or of their justification by the righteousness of Christ, by which they were justified from all sin; and were all fair, and without spot; which was through the Gospel of Christ revealing his righteousness to them, or through the sentence of justification he, by his Spirit, passed upon their consciences.

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

Abide in me, and I in you] The former of these is an exhortation to continue in the exercise of faith and love upon Christ, holding to him the head, cleaving to him with full purpose of heart, and so deriving life, grace, strength, and nourishment from him; the latter is a promise encouraging to the former; for as Christ is formed in the hearts of his people, he continues there as the living principle of all grace. And so,

As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me] Which strongly expresses the necessity of abiding in Christ by fresh repeated acts of faith: and it is easy to observe, that when believers depart from Christ, though it be but partially, and for a time, for they cannot finally and totally depart from him, in what a poor, withered, fruitless condition they are, both in their frames and duties.

5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

I am the vine, ye are the branches] Christ here repeats what he said of himself, *the vine*, for the application of *the branches* to his disciples: which expresses their sameness of nature with Christ; their strict and close union to him; and the communication of life and grace, holiness and fruitfulness, of support and strength, and of perseverance in grace, and holiness to the end from him:

He that abideth in me, and I in him] Which is the case of all that are once in Christ, and he in them:

The same bringeth forth much fruit] In the exercise of grace, and performance of good works; and continues to do so as long as he lives; not by virtue of his own free-will, power, and strength, but by grace continually received from Christ:

For without me ye can do nothing] Nothing that is spiritually good; no, not any thing at all, be it little or great, easy or difficult to be performed; cannot think a good thought, speak a good word, or do a good action; can neither begin one, nor, when it is begun, perfect it. Nothing is to be done without Christ; without his Spirit, grace, strength, and presence; or as separate from him. Were it possible for the branches that are truly in him, to be removed from him, they could bring forth no fruits of good works, any more than a branch separated from the vine can bring forth grapes; so that all the fruitfulness of a believer is to be ascribed to Christ, and his grace, and not to the free-will and power of man.

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

If a man abide not in me] Christ does not say, *if ye abide not in me*; he would not suppose this of his true disciples; Judas now being removed, to whom he may have some respect in this verse; though it may be applied to any one who has made a profession of Christ, and denies the truths of the gospel, neglects the ordinances of it, or walks unworthy of his profession; of whom the following things may be truly said,

He is cast forth as a branch] That is unfruitful, and is therefore taken away from the vine, and cast forth out of the vineyard. This signifies the ejection of worthless and fruitless professors out of the churches; for such who are either unsound in their principles, or are remiss and negligent in their attendance on the worship of God, with the church, or are loose and vain in their lives and conversations, are to be removed from communion with the people of God.

And

And is withered] Some versions, as the Arabic, Syriac, and Persic, read this as an epithet of the word *branch*, thus; “the branch that is withered;” expressing the condition the branch is in before it is cast forth out of the vineyard, and the reason of its being cast forth: but others read it as a new and distinct predicate of the branch, shewing the case it is in, immediately upon its being cast forth: it may be cut off, and cast out with its leaves upon it, though without fruit; but as soon as ever it is ejected, it withers away. So mere external professors of religion, when they are cast out of the communion of the church, presently the leaf of profession, which once seemed green, decays, loses its verdure, and that seeming fruit which grew upon them, shrinks to nothing, and they become *trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit*: their shew of life, zeal, religion, and holiness disappears, and all their external gifts, light, knowledge, and understanding, even in a speculative way, vanish:

And men gather them] Or, as some copies have it, *unto it*, which best agrees with the word *branch*. This was a common thing when branches were thrown out of a vineyard, for men to come and gather them up for a use hereafter mentioned. So when unworthy members are put out of a church of Christ, the men of the world gather them into their society; or they are taken into the congregations of false teachers, who being sensual, and without the spirit, separate themselves; or it may be read impersonally, *they are gathered*; or it is *gathered*: so wicked men, and Christless professors, will be gathered by the angels at the last day, and severed by them from the righteous, whom they will place at Christ's left hand to receive their awful doom:

And cast them into the fire, and they are burned] Or, “it is burned;” for nothing else is such a branch good for; see *Ezek. xv. 2—5*. This may respect either the gnawings of conscience, that distress of mind, if not despair, that *fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation*, which attend apostates in this life; or their being cast into the everlasting burnings of hell-fire by angels at the last day, as will be the case of every unfruitful tree, of the chaff and tares.

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you] Abiding in Christ is here explained by his words or doctrines abiding in his disciples; by which are meant his Gospel, and the truths of it. This abides when it comes in power, and becomes the

engrafted word; and may be said to do so, when such, in whose hearts it has a place, and has taken deep root, continue to have a relish and favour of it, a true and hearty affection for it, esteeming it above their necessary food; when they hold fast the profession of it, stand fast in it, steadfastly abide by it, and constantly attend on it; all which is a considerable evidence that they do, yea, there is a promise that they *shall continue in the Son and in the Father*, 1 John ii. 24. The blessing and privilege that such shall enjoy is,

Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you] Or, as some copies read it, “it shall be given you:” but this must be understood not of temporal things, as riches, honours, profits, pleasures, or whatever even the carnal mind of a believer himself may sometimes desire; but of things spiritual, and with such limitations and restrictions as these; whatever is according to the will of God, for the Spirit of God himself asks for no other for the saints; whatever is for the glory of God, and for their own spiritual profit and edification; and whatever is agreeable to the words and doctrines of Christ, which abide in them. Every thing of this kind they ask in faith, and with a submission to the divine will, they may expect to receive.

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

Herein is my Father glorified] This does not so much refer to what goes before concerning the disciples abiding in Christ, and he and his words abiding in them, and doing for them whatever they ask, though by all this God is glorified; as to what follows, the fruitfulness of the disciples:

That ye bear much fruit] Of doctrine, grace, and good works, which shew them to be trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, and the work of his hands; wherein the glory of his power, grace, and mercy is greatly displayed. All the fruits of righteousness, with which they were filled by Christ, were by him to the praise and glory of God; yea, by the fruitfulness of grace, and of life and conversation, by the lively exercise of grace, and conscientious discharge of duty, as well as by light of doctrine, and usefulness in the ministration of the Gospel, the disciples and servants of Christ not only glorified God themselves, but are the means of others glorifying him. It follows,

So shall ye be my disciples] Or “disciples to me;” to my honour and glory also, as well as to my Father's; not that their fruitfulness made them the disciples of Christ, but made them appear to be so; or made them honourable ones. Just as good

good fruit does not make the tree good; the tree is first good, and therefore it brings forth good fruit; but shews it to be good: as by continuing in his word, abiding by his Gospel they appeared to be disciples *indeed*, really and truly such; and as by loving one another, so by other fruits of righteousness, other men, all men know that they are the disciples of Christ.

9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

As the Father hath loved me] As his own Son, and as mediator, from everlasting; and in time, in his state of humiliation, throughout the course of his obedience, and under all his sufferings; which he testified more than once by a voice from heaven; which he shewed by concealing nothing from him as mediator, by giving all things into his hands, by shewing him all that he himself did, by appointing him the saviour of the body, and making him the head of the church, by exalting him at his right hand, and ordaining him to be judge of quick and dead.

So have I loved you] Christ loves his as his spouse and bride, as his dear children, and members of his body, as branches in him the vine, as believers in him, and followers of him; which he has shewn by espousing both their persons and cause, by assuming their nature, by suffering and dying in their room and stead, and making all suitable provision for them, both for time and eternity. And there is a likeness between the Father's love to him, and his love to his disciples and followers: as his Father loved him from everlasting, so did he love them; as his Father loved him with a love of complacency and delight, so did he, and so does he love them; and as his Father loved him with a special and peculiar affection, with an unchangeable, invariable, constant love, which will last for ever, in like manner does Christ love his people; and with this he enforces the following exhortation.

Continue ye in my love] Meaning either in his love to them, which, as he always continues in it without any variableness or shadow of turning, so he would have them continue in believing their interest in it, prising and valuing it, in imitating, and remembering it; or else in their love to him, to his person, to his people, to his Gospel, to his ordinances, ways, and worship, which he knew was liable to wax cold, though it could not be lost.

10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love] Not that their continuance in the hearts-love and affection of Christ, depended upon their observation of his commands; for as the keeping of them is not the cause or reason of the saints having an interest in the love of Christ, so it is not the cause or reason of their abiding in it; but to such that observe the commandments of Christ he will continue to make further discoveries of his love, and let them see more clearly and largely what a value he has for them, and how much he loves them: or the sense is, that by keeping the commandments of Christ, his disciples and followers shew, that they love him, and continue in their affection to him:

Even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love] The commandments of the Father kept by Christ were not only the precepts of the moral law, and the rites of the ceremonial one, which he strictly observed; but the preaching of the Gospel, and submitting to the ordinances of it, doing of miracles, and laying down his life for his people; in performing which, as his Father testified his approbation of them, and how strongly he was affected to him, what an abiding he had in his love; so Christ hereby shewed his constant and continued love to his Father; and which was done by him, that the world, as well as his disciples, might know how much he loved him; see chapter xiv. 31.

11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

These things have I spoken unto you] Concerning the vine and branches, his abiding in them, and they in him, their fruitfulness from him, and perseverance in him, his love to them, and theirs to him:

That my joy might remain in you] Meaning either that joy with which he joyed in and over them, as united to him, and which is of the same nature as the joy of the bridegroom over the bride, and which will always remain and continue the same; or rather that joy which he is the author, object, ground, and matter of; for there is always reason to rejoice in him, even in the most afflictive circumstances of life:

And that your joy might be full] That grace of joy which is implanted in the soul, by the Spirit of God in regeneration, and arises from, and is increased by discoveries of the person, grace, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; and is full of glory, upon a clear sight of him in this life, and will be entirely full, completely perfected in the other world, when he will be seen as he is.

12 ¶ This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

This is my commandment] Christ had been before speaking of his commandments; and he mentions this as the principal one, and to which all the rest may be reduced; for as the precepts of the second table of the moral law may be briefly comprehended in this one duty, love to our neighbour; so all the duties of christianity, relative to one another, are reducible to this, by love to serve each other. This was the commandment which lay uppermost on Christ's heart, and which he knew, if attended to, the rest could not fail of being observed. The argument by which, and the manner in which he presses it, is as before:

As I have loved you] Than which nothing can be more strong and forcible; see *John* xiii. 34.

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Greater love hath no man than this] By these words our Lord shews, how far love to another should extend, even to the laying down of our lives for the brethren; which is the highest instance of love among men;

That a man lay down his life for his friends] And in which believers should not come short of them; and also his great love to his people, and explains what he had just said, *as I have loved you*; which in a little time would be seen, by his laying down his life for them: for he not only came down from heaven, and laid aside his glory and royal majesty, but he laid down his life; not his gold and silver, and the riches of this world, which were all his, but his life; than which, nothing is dearer to a man, is himself, his all: and besides, Christ's life was not a common one, it was not the life of an innocent person only, or the life of a mere man, but of a man in union with the Son of God; it was the Lord of glory and prince of life, who was crucified, and slain; a life that was entirely at his own dispose; it had never been forfeited by sin, nor could it have been forced away from him by men or devils; it was laid down of and by himself, freely and voluntarily; and that for, in the room, and instead of his people, as a ransom for them; he being their surety and substitute, and standing in their law-place and stead, he took their sins upon him, bore the curse of the law, sustained his Father's wrath, and all the punishment due to sin; and so suffered death, the death of the cross; the just, in the room and stead of the unjust: the persons for whom he laid down his life, are described as *his friends*; not that they were originally so; being enemies and enmity itself to God, when he laid down his life for them, and recon-

ciled them; they were not such as had carried themselves friendly, or had shewn any love and affection to him, but all the reverse: but they are so called, because he had chosen them for his friends: he had pitched upon them, and resolved to make them so; and by dying for them, reconciled them who were enemies; and in consequence of this, by his Spirit and grace, of enemies makes them friends; so that his love in dying for his people, is greater than any instance of love among men: he laid down his life for his enemies, without any sinister selfish views, and that freely and voluntarily; whereas among men, when one man has laid down his life for others, either they have been very deserving, or he has been forced to it, or it has been done with the view of popular applause and vainglory.

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

Ye are my friends] This is an application of the foregoing passage, and more clearly explains it. The character of *friends*, is applied to the disciples of Christ; and belongs not only to his apostles, but to all that love him, believe in him, and obey him; to whom he has shewed himself friendly, by laying down his life for them: for this clearly shews, that Christ had respect in the former words, to his own laying down his life for his people, in consequence of his great love to them; whereby he has made them friends, and who appear to be so by their cheerful obedience to him:

If ye do whatsoever I command you] Not that their doing of the commandments of Christ interested them in his favour; or made them his friends; or was the reason and motive of his laying down his life for them, and shewing himself in such a friendly manner to them: but the sense is, that by observing his commands, from a principle of love, they would make it appear that they were his friends; being influenced by his grace, and constrained by a sense of his love in dying for them, to act such a part.

15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

Henceforth I call you not servants] As they and the rest of the people of God had been under the legal dispensation; for though they were children, yet differed nothing from servants; and were very much influenced and impressed with a servile spirit, a spirit of bondage unto fear, being kept under tutors and governors by a severe discipline; but
now

now Christ being come in the flesh, and being about to lay down his life, and make reconciliation for them, henceforward he would not use, treat, or account them as servants:

For the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth] Designs to do, or is about to do; he is not made privy to all his counsels and purposes; these are only opened to him as necessity requires; which was pretty much the case of the Old-Testament-church, who, comparatively speaking, were used as servants; and had not the knowledge of the mysteries of grace, and of the counsels of God, as they are now laid open under the Gospel-dispensation:

But I have called you friends] That is, accounted, reckoned of them, and used them as his friends and familiar acquaintance; whom he told all his mind unto, and would go on to treat them as such; by leading them more and more, as they were able to bear it, into the designs of his grace, and the doctrines of his Gospel: just as Abraham was called *the friend of God*, and proved to be so, by his not concealing from him the thing he was about to do:

For all things I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you] Not all that he knew as the omniscient God, for there was no necessity that all such things should be made known to them; but all things which he had delivered to him as man and mediator, by his Father, respecting the salvation of men; all things which he himself was to do and suffer, in order to obtain eternal redemption; and the whole of the Gospel, as to the essential and substantial parts of it, they were to preach; for otherwise, there were some things which as yet they were not able to bear, and were reserved to another time, to be made known unto them by his Spirit.

16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you] Not but that they had made choice of him as their Lord and Master, Saviour and Redeemer; but not first, he was beforehand with them; he chose them, before they chose him; so that his choice of them was entirely free, did not arise from any character, motive, or condition in them: the allusion is to a custom of the Jews, the reverse of which Christ acted; with whom it was usual for disciples to choose their own masters, and not masters

their disciples; hence that advice of R. Josphuah ben Perachiah, said (1) to be the master of Jesus of Nazareth. “עשרי לך רב (m), make, provide, or choose thyself a master,” and get thyself a “companion.” Those words in Cant. ii. 16. *My beloved is mine, and I am his*, are thus paraphrased by the Jews (n); “He hath chosen me, and I have chosen him.” Which is not amiss, provided the latter choice is thought to be by virtue, and in consequence of the former; if not, our Lord directly opposes the words and sense. This may be understood both of election to salvation, and of choice to the office of apostleship; in both which Christ was first, or chose them before they chose him, that good part, which shall never be taken away; for as they were chosen in him, so by him, before the foundation of the world; being as early loved by him, as by his Father; and in consequence thereof, were chosen by him for his people and peculiar treasure; he first chose and called them to be his disciples and apostles, to follow him, preach his Gospel, and become fishers of men; and clothed them with full power and authority, to exercise their high office:

And ordained you] Which may design either ordination to eternal life, or apostleship, before the world began; as Jeremiah was ordained to be a prophet, before he was born; or else the investiture of them with that office, and with all gifts and graces necessary for the discharge of it; for when he called and sent forth his disciples to preach the Gospel, he is said to *ordain* them, Mark iii. 14. and the rather this may be meant here, because the former is designed by his choosing them; or he *set* them, or planted them in himself, a fruitful soil, that they might shoot up and bear much fruit, as it follows:

That ye should go and bring forth fruit] Go first into Judea, and then into all the world; and bring forth the fruits of righteousness and holiness in themselves, and be the happy means of the conversion, and so of bringing in a large harvest of souls to Jesus Christ:

And that your fruit should remain] As it has done; for they not only persevered themselves in faith and holiness, in preaching the Gospel, and living according to it, but the persons, whose conversion they were instruments of, continued stedfastly in their doctrine, and in the fellowship of the saints; and the Gospel which was preached by them, has remained, though not always in the same place, yet in the world ever since:

That

(1) Ganz Tsemach David, fol. 24. 2.
c. 1. §. 6.

(m) Pirke Abot,
c. 1. §. 9. 1.

(n) Zohar in Exod. fol. 9. 1.

That whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you] This is added, to encourage their perseverance in the work he chose and called them to, which would be attended with many difficulties and discouragements; wherefore as they would stand in need of divine assistance, they might assure themselves of it; for be it what it would they should ask of his Father, making mention of his name and righteousness; whether for a sufficiency of gifts and grace in the discharge of their duty; or for success in it; or for the confirmation of the truths delivered by them; or for liberty and boldness to speak in vindication of themselves, when called to it before kings and governors, it should be given them.

17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.

These things I command you] The doctrines which Christ spake, as one having authority, concerning the vine and branches; his love to his disciples in laying down his life for them, and in accounting and using them as friends, and not servants; in choosing, ordaining, and sending them forth, for the ends above-mentioned; these were delivered by him with this view, to promote brotherly love among them:

That ye love one another] This lay much upon his heart, he often mentions it; this is the third time it is expressed by him, in these his last discourses; and indeed, since he had declared such strong love and affection for them, it was but right and proper they should love one another; nor does any thing more tend to increase mutual love among the saints, than the consideration of their common interest in the unchangeable love of their Lord.

18 ¶ If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

If the world hate you] After our Lord had signified how much he loved his disciples, and what great things he had done for them, he faithfully acquaints them with the world's hatred of them, and what they must expect to meet with from that quarter, and says many things to fortify their minds against it; his words do not imply any doubt about it, but he rather takes it for granted, as a thing out of question; if, or *seeing the world hate you*; they had had some experience of it already, and might look for more, when their master was gone from them: wherefore, he, in order to engage their patience under it, says,

Ye know that it hated me before it hated you] Which words are an appeal of Christ to his apostles, for the usage he had met with from the wicked

and unbelieving world of the Jews; how they had expressed their hatred, not only by words, calling him a gluttonous man, and a wine-bibber, a finner, a Samaritan, a madman, one that had a devil, yea, Beelzebub himself: but by deeds; taking up stones to stone him more than once, leading him to the brow of an hill, in order to cast him down headlong, consulting by various means to take away his life, as Herod did in his very infancy; which was done before they shewed so much hatred to his disciples; and perhaps reference may be had to the original enmity between the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent, mentioned Gen. iii. 15. as well as to these instances. Moreover, the words *before you*, rendered *before you*, may be translated *the first*, or *chief of you*, your Lord and head: and denotes the dignity, excellency, and superiority of Christ; wherefore it is suggested, that if he, who was so much before them in personal worth and greatness, was hated by the world, they should not think it hard, or any strange thing, that this should be their case.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

If ye were of the world] Belonged to the world, were of the same spirit and principles with it, and pursued the same practices:

The world would love its own] For every like loves its like; the men of the world love each others persons, company, and conversation:

But because ye are not of the world] Once they were, being born into it, brought up in it, had their conversation among the men of it, were themselves men of carnal, worldly, principles and practices; but being called by Christ, and becoming his disciples, they were no more of it; and as he was not of the world, so they were not of it, though they were in it. The Jews distinguish the disciples of the wise men, from, *וְהַנְּסִיחִים* "the men of the world (o)," pretending that they were not; but this is a character that only belongs to the disciples of Christ, in consequence of their being called by him out of it:

But I have chosen you out of the world] Which designs not the eternal election of them, but the separation of them from the rest of the world in effectual vocation, and the designation of them to his work and service:

Therefore the world hateth you] And since it was upon that account, they had no reason to be uneasy,

(o) T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 80. 2.

easy, but rather to rejoice; seeing this was an evidence of their not belonging to the world, and of being chosen and called by Christ out of it.

20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

Remember the word that I said unto you] For their further consolation under the hatred of the world, he puts them in mind of a saying of his, which he had lately used, chapter xiii. 16. to teach them humility, self-denial, and brotherly love, and elsewhere, as in *Matt. x. 24.* for the same purpose as here; namely, to engage them patiently to bear the hatred of men, and all indignities and insults from them, for his name's sake;

The servant is not greater than his lord] Not so great, and consequently not more, nor so much deserving of respect, or to be treated in a better manner. Suggesting, that Christ was their Lord and Master, as he was, and they were his servants; and therefore were not greater than him, but much inferior to him, and could not expect better usage from men than he had:

If they have persecuted me] As they did, both by words and deeds, as before observed:

They will persecute you] And so they did in like manner, and from place to place:

If they have kept my saying] Which is either ironically spoken, or designs that insidious malicious observation of Christ's words, made by the Jews, with an intent to catch and lay hold on something to improve against him:

They will keep your's also] That is, either they will attend to your doctrines, or they will make the same spiteful remarks, and put the same evil constructions on your words as on mine.

21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

But all these things will they do unto you] Christ here signifies, that all the hatred and persecutions raised against his people by the world, would not be on their own account, for any evil actions done by them; they would not suffer as thieves, murderers, and evil-doers, but as christians; or as he says,

For my name's sake] Because they were called by his name, and called upon his name; because they professed his name, and confessed him to be the Messiah and Redeemer; because they loved his

name Jesus, a Saviour, believed in his name, and hoped in him for eternal life; and also preached him, and in his name salvation, and encouraged others to believe in him; and therefore they had no reason to be ashamed, but rather to rejoice; as they afterwards did, that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name: besides, this malice and hatred of theirs, arose from ignorance of the Father of Christ:

Because they know not him that sent me] They did not know that Jesus was the Christ, and sent of God; they did not acknowledge him to be so, or the Father to be the sender of him; and because Christ and his disciples asserted this, therefore they were the objects of their hatred.

22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.

If I had not come and spoken unto them] The ignorance of the Jews is represented as inexcusable, since Christ was come, and had preached unto them; if he had not come and told them that he was the Messiah, they might have pleaded an excuse for their ignorance of him and his mission, and of the Father that sent him: but inasmuch as he was come in the flesh, and came to them his own; and came also a light into the world, carrying along with him evidence, conviction, and demonstration, of his being the Messiah; speaking such words as never man did; preaching with such authority as the scribes and Pharisees did not; declaring in plain terms he was the Christ of God, and that if they did not believe him to be so, they would die in their sins; they could have no pretext to make for their ignorance and disbelief: if all this had not been done,

They had not had sin] Or been guilty of the sin of unbelief, in the rejection of the Messiah; not that they would have been without sin in any sense, or without any kind of sin, but without this particular sin; at least they would have excused and wiped themselves clean, and would have looked like innocent and sinless persons, under all their ignorance and unbelief:

But now they have no cloke for their sin] They could not say, had he come to us, and told us that he was the Messiah, and given evidence of his being sent by the Father, we would have believed him, and received him as the Messiah; for he did do this; and so cut off all excuses and pretences from them.

23 He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

The

The hatred the world bears to the followers of Christ, is interpretatively hatred to Christ himself; and hatred to Christ himself, is no other than hatred to his Father; and indeed, all the hatred that is shewn by the men of the world to Christ, to his Gospel, and to his faithful ministers and followers, originally arises from that enmity, that is naturally in the heart of every unregenerate man against God: now since not only Christ, but the Father also, is hated by the world, the children of God and disciples of Christ, may sit easier under all the resentment, frowns, and malice of the world.

24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

If I had not done among them the works] This is another, and a new argument, evincing the inexcusableness of their ignorance, and infidelity, and sin, taken from the works that Christ did; such as healing the sick, raising the dead, giving sight to the blind, causing the dumb to speak, the deaf to hear, and the lame to walk, cleansing lepers, and casting out of devils; which were clear proofs, and full demonstrations of his Deity, and of his being the true Messiah:

And which none other man did] In his own name, and by his own power; and which none of the men of God ever did; as Moses, Elijah, Elisha, or others; and particularly that of giving sight to one that was born blind: now if these works had not been done among them, openly, visibly, and publicly,

They had not had sin] Or so much sin; or their sin of unbelief would not have been so great, or attended with such aggravating circumstances; or they would not have been guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost, as many of them were; who saw his works and miracles, and were convicted in their own consciences that he was the Messiah, and yet rejected him, against all the light and evidence which the Spirit of God gave by them, and by whom Christ wrought his miracles:

But now have they both seen] The works which were done, and the Messiah, whose mission from the Father they proved;

And hated both me and my Father] For their rejection of him as the Messiah, notwithstanding the doctrines he taught, and the miracles he wrought, plainly arose from obstinacy, malice, and inveterate hatred against Christ, and against the Father that sent him.

25 But *this cometh to pass*, that the word

might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

But this cometh to pass] This hatred against Christ, and which is pointed at his people for his sake, and reaches to the Father also on his account, is suffered to be, and therefore should be patiently born:

That the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law] Either in Psalm xxxv. 19. or rather in Psalm lxix. 4. which is a psalm of Christ, as appears by citations out of it in the New Testament, or references to it; see John ii. 17. and chapter xix. 28. Matt. xxvii. 48. The whole scripture is sometimes called *the law*, as here; for not the law of Moses is meant, or the five books of Moses, but the writings of the Old Testament; which the Jews had in their hands, to them being committed the oracles of God; and sometimes are so called, when the book of psalms is particularly referred to, as now; see John x. 34. and chapter xii. 34. the words cited are,

They hated me without a cause] Without any reason for it, Christ having given them no provocation, or just cause of offence, anger, or hatred. This sin of hating without a cause, is represented by the Jews as a very heinous one, and as the reason of the destruction of the second temple; under which they observe, that men studied in the law, and in the commandments, and in doing of good, and therefore ask, Why it was destroyed? The answer is, Because there was under it, *חנף ורשע*, "hatred without a cause;" to teach us, that hatred without a cause, is equal to the three (capital) transgressions, Idolatry, Adultery, and Murder, for which they say the first temple was destroyed (p). This is a tacit acknowledgment that the sin here mentioned, was a reigning one, or that it much abounded in the times of Christ.

26 ¶ But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

But when the Comforter is come] Or Advocate, the Spirit of God; who was to be, and has been an advocate for Christ, against the world, and for his people, against all their enemies; and who as he was to reprove, and did reprove the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, in favour of Christ, so he was to assist his people, and plead their cause, and help them, in vindication of themselves, before the princes of the earth, as he did; and who also was to act, and has acted the part of

a com-

(p) T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 9. 2. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 38. 3.

a comforter to them, under all the hatred and violence they have met with from the world; by taking and applying the things of Christ to them; by shedding the love of God in them; by applying the promises of the Gospel to them; by witnessing their adoption, and sealing them up to the day of redemption:

Whom I will send unto you from the Father] Visibly, as on the day of pentecost, in cloven tongues as of fire; and invisibly into their hearts, by the secret influence of his light and grace; which mission, as it suggests no inferiority in the Spirit, either to the Father or the Son; since the same Spirit with the Father, was the sender of Christ; so it is expressive of the equal Deity of Christ, and his joint power and authority with the Father.

Even the Spirit of truth] Who is the true Spirit, truth itself; yea, the true God, with the Father and Son; the Spirit of him who is truth; the dictator of the scriptures of truth; who leads his people into all truth; and is the Spirit of truth, as he is a witness or testifier of Christ, hereafter promised:

Which proceedeth from the Father] Christ is not content to describe him by his work and office, as an Advocate and Comforter, and as the Spirit of truth; and from his mission by him from the Father; all which shews his usefulness and authority; but also from his nature and essence, which is the same with the Father's; and from his peculiar personal and distinctive character, expressed by his proceeding from the Father; and which is mentioned, as what is distinct from his mission by Christ, from the Father before spoken of; and designs no other, than the eternal, ineffable, and continued act of his procession from the Father and the Son; in which he partakes of the same nature with them, and which personally distinguishes him from them. The ancient Jews (q) spoke of him just in the same language, *the Spirit of God*, in Gen. i. 2. they say is the Holy Spirit, רִנָּה מֵאֵלֹהִים "which proceedeth from God:" very pertinently does Christ take notice of this his character here, when he was about to speak of him as his testifier:

He shall testify of me] Of his Deity and Sonship, of his incarnation, of his being the Messiah, of his sufferings and death, of his resurrection and ascension, of his exaltation at the right hand of God, and of his ordination to be the judge of quick and dead; all which he bore testimony to, by the gifts bestowed upon the apostles, and the great grace that was upon them all; by the signs,

wonders, and divers miracles, by which the Gospel of Christ was confirmed; and by the power, influence, and success, which attended the preaching of it every where. Thus he testified of Christ, against the blaspheming Jews, and persecuting Gentiles, to the reproof and confusion of them; and he testified of him to the apostles, and all true believers, to their great joy and comfort, and to the support of them, under all the malice and hatred of the world.

27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

And ye also shall bear witness] That is, of Christ; of all the things he did in Jerusalem, and in the land of the Jews; being eye-witnesses, and ministers, or servants of the Word, who constantly attended upon him; of all the good he did to the bodies and souls of men; of the various miracles he wrought, and of the several doctrines which were taught by him: what they saw with their eyes, heard with their ears, and with their hands handled of the Word of life, that they could declare, and did declare, and bore a faithful testimony to; they were to be, and were witnesses of his sufferings and death, of his resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven; they were a company of select men, chosen before of God for this purpose; they were the most proper to be concerned herein, having been for a considerable time his intimates and associates:

Because ye have been with me from the beginning] From the beginning of his ministry; for as soon as he entered on his public work, he called them to be followers of him; and who continued with him to the end; and therefore were the most capable of bearing a testimony concerning his person, doctrines, and works; of all he did and suffered, from first to last.

C H A P. XVI.

In this chapter Christ comforteth his disciples against persecution, v. 1—4. By his promises of the Spirit, and his work, v. 5—15. Telleth them, he should be taken from them, and again seen by them, v. 16—19. That their sorrow should be turned into joy, v. 20—22. He exhorteth them to prayer, with his promises, v. 23—27. Telleth them he should leave the world, v. 28. And comforteth them in their faith, v. 29—33.

THESE things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

These things have I spoken unto you] Concerning the world's hatred and persecution of them, and the little regard they would shew to their doctrine;

(q) Zohar in Gen. fol. 3. 4.

trine; these things Christ thought proper to give them notice of beforehand, that expecting them, they might be prepared for them, and be fortified against them;

[*That ye should not be offended*] His view in speaking of them, was not to discourage them, but to prevent their stumbling at them, and falling by them. Hardships coming upon persons at unawares, bear the harder upon their spirits, and they are more apt to take offence at them, and be impatient under them, which is prevented by previous intimation: had Christ said nothing of these things that should befall his disciples, they might have surprised them, and have been a stumbling to them; and might have tempted them to have relinquished their profession of him, and dropped their ministerial work; whereas being apprised of them beforehand, they were not so shocking to them. This shews the tender concern of Christ for his disciples, how careful he was to remove every occasion of stumbling, or what might be matter of offence to them; and may teach us to act in such like manner towards one another, in this, or any other case.

2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

[*They shall put you out of the synagogues*] The Jews had made a law already, that he who confessed that Jesus was the Messiah, should be cast out of their synagogues; and they had put it in execution upon the blind man Christ restored to sight, for his profession of faith in him; which struck such a terror upon the people, that even many of the chief rulers who believed that Jesus was the true Messiah, durst not confess him, because of this law; for it was what they could not bear the thoughts of, to be deemed and treated as heretics and apostates, and the vilest of wretches: for this putting out of the synagogue, was not the lesser excommunication, which was called, נידוי *Niddui*, and was a separation from a particular synagogue for a while; but the greater excommunication, either by חרם *Cherem*, or שמתה *Shammatha*; when a person was cut off from the whole body of the Jewish church, called often *the synagogue*, or congregation of the people; and was devoted and consigned to utter destruction, which was the height of their ecclesiastical power, their rage and malice could carry them to: and this the apostles were to expect; nay, not only this, but to have their lives taken away by ruffians, under a pretence of zeal for the service of God, and interest of religion:

[*Yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service*] For this is not to be understood of their being delivered up into the hands of civil magistrates, and of their being tried, judged, condemned, and put to death by their orders, but of their being murdered by a sett of men called *zealots*; who, in imitation of Phinehas, as they pretended, took upon them, whenever they found any person guilty of a capital crime, as idolatry, blasphemy, &c. or what they judged so, to fall upon him at once, and without any more ado kill him; nor were they accountable to any court of judicature for such an action, and which was reckoned laudable and praise-worthy: in this way, and by the hands of such miscreants, Stephen the protomartyr lost his life; for though they had him before a council, and suborned witnesses against him, yet, when in his own defence he said what these zealots interpreted blasphemy, they ran upon him at once, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him to death; and without any leave or authority from the sanhedrim, as appears: and these men were accounted good men, zealous, קנאו של מקדש (a) “with a zeal for God,” his honour and glory; and valued themselves much upon such butcheries and inhumanity; and thought, as our Lord here says, that they *did God service*; or as the Syriac renders it, וקרבתו מקדש “offered a sacrifice to God;” and so the Arabic and Ethiopic versions: and indeed this is a rule with the Jews (b), and which they form upon the instance and example of Phinehas; “that whoever sheds the blood of wicked men, (and such they reckoned the apostles and followers of Christ to be,) קרב כאלו קריב כאלו קריב “it is all one as if he offered a sacrifice;” they looked upon this to be a sacrifice acceptable and well pleasing to God: so the apostle Paul, in his unregenerate state, thought he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Christ; and that he was doing God service, when he persecuted the church, and gave his voice with these ruffians to put the saints to death.

3. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

[*And these things will they do unto you*] Christ here opens the true spring and source of the furious zeal of the Jews against the apostles, in putting them out of their synagogues, and taking away their lives; it was pure wilful ignorance of the Father and himself:

Because

(a) Jarchi & Bartenora in Misn. Sanhedrim, c. 9. §. 6.

(b) Bemidbar Rabba, Parash, 21. fol. 229. 3.

Because they have not known the Father, nor me] Though they boasted of their knowledge of God, yet they knew him not as the Father and sender of Christ, at least they would not own him as such; nor Jesus as the true Messiah, and sent of the Father, to redeem and save his people from their sins. And since they neither knew the Father, nor Christ, it is no wonder they did not know, own, and acknowledge, the disciples of Christ, but used them in the ill manner they did; their zeal was not according to knowledge, it was a blind and misguided one: and this is mentioned, not to extenuate or excuse their sin, though it shews, they were not out of the reach of mercy, because they, as the apostle says of himself, *did it ignorantly in unbelief*; but as an argument with the disciples to bear their ill usage with patience, and to pity them and pray for them.

4 But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

But these things have I told you] Christ enlarged on this disagreeable subject, and was the more particular in enumerating the evils his apostles were to endure for his name-sake:

That when the time shall come] Some copies read it, *their time*; so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic render it; that is, the time when wicked men will be suffered to vent all their rage and malice:

Ye may remember that I told you of them] Which might serve greatly to confirm them in the faith of him as the omniscient God, and the true Messiah, and encourage them to depend on his veracity and faithfulness in his promises; that since the evil things which he spoke of came upon them, so they might hope, believe, and expect, that all the good things he had assured them of should be accomplished; and also to engage them to bear their sufferings with the greater patience, since they were appointed by God, and foretold by their Lord and master.

And these things I said not unto you at the beginning] When he first called them to be followers of him; for though when he ordained them, and sent them forth to preach the Gospel in the cities of Judea, which was some time after he had called them by his grace, he did acquaint them with some of the troubles and exercises they should meet with; as that they should be hated by all men, persecuted from city to city, beat in the synagogues, delivered up to councils, and brought before kings and governors; see *Matt. x.* yet he did not so

fully and distinctly speak of these things, as here and at this time: his reason for such a conduct was this,

Because I was with you] Wherefore he neither spoke so fully and distinctly of their troubles, because he was with them, and took them upon himself: and indeed, whilst he was with them, the rage and malice of the Jews were not so much against his disciples, as himself; nor did he for the same reason speak so largely of the Comforter, and of the comforts they should receive from him, because as they had not the exercises they should afterwards have, so they then had Christ for their comforter.

5 ¶ But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?

But now I go my way to him that sent me] These words seem to belong to the preceding verse, and to contain a reason why Christ spoke of the trials and afflictions of his disciples now, because he was going away from them to his Father; when, as they would be at the head of his affairs in this world, so they would the more become the butt of the rage of bad men:

And none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?] Peter indeed asked the question, chapter xiii. 36. but his meaning was, What part of the country he was going to? What private and inaccessible place he was about to betake himself to? He had no notion of his going out of the world, or to heaven to his Father, and therefore inquired nothing about it; and when Christ had suggested to his disciples, that he was going to his Father's house, to prepare mansions for them, they did not seem to understand him, chapter xiv. 2, 3, 5. Nor did they ask what he meant by his *Father's house*, or what those *mansions* were he was going to prepare; and what the glory was, he was going to possess for himself and them; they ask neither about the place he was going to, nor the way to it, nor the happiness to be enjoyed there.

6 But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.

But because I have said these things unto you] Of being hated and persecuted by the Jews, of being put out of their synagogues, and of losing of their lives; and particularly of his departure from them, or the loss of his bodily presence:

Sorrow hath filled your heart] Sorrow for his absence so possessed their minds, seized on all the powers and faculties of their souls, and engrossed all their thoughts, that it never entered into the heart of any of them to inquire about the place he

was

was going to, or the state he should enter upon; which had they had any right notions of, would have greatly contributed to have abated their sorrow, quieted their minds, made them easy under, and reconciled them unto his departure from them.

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

Nevertheless I tell you the truth] Christ was truth itself, and could say nothing else; but he makes use of this way of speaking, to raise the attention of his disciples, and to engage their belief of what he was about to say, and of which they were not easily persuaded; which was, that however overwhelmed they were with grief and sorrow, because of his going away from them, a greater truth he could not tell them, than that this would be to their real good and advantage:

It is expedient for you that I go away] Christ's death here, as in many other places in these discourses of his, is signified by *going away*, a *departure*, taking a sort of a *journey*, such an one as indeed is common to all mankind; death is the way of all the earth, and which Christ took by agreement with his Father; a *dark way* is the valley of the shadow of death, and so it was to Christ, who went away in the dark, under the hidings of his Father's face. It is a man's going to his long home, and a long journey it is, till he returns in the resurrection-morn; though it was a short one to Christ, who rose again the third day. The phrase supposes the place and persons he went from, this world and his disciples; and the place and persons he went unto, the grave, heaven, his Father, the blessed Spirit, angels, and glorified saints; and is expressive of the voluntariness of his death, he was not fetched, or thrust and forced away, but he went away of himself; and is a very easy and familiar way of expressing death by, and greatly takes off the dread and terror of it: it is only moving from one place to another, as from one house, city, or country, to another; and shews, that it is not an annihilation of a man, either in body or soul, only a translating of him from one place and state to another. Now the death of Christ was expedient, not only for himself, which he does not mention; he being concerned more for the happiness of his people than for himself; but for his disciples and all believers; for hereby a great many evils were prevented falling upon them, which otherwise would; as the heavy strokes of divine justice, the

curse and condemnation of the law, the wrath and vengeance of God, and eternal death, ruin, and destruction: as well as many good things were hereby obtained for them; as the redemption of their souls from sin, law, hell, and death; peace, reconciliation, and atonement; the full and free forgiveness of all their sins, an everlasting righteousness, and eternal life. Moreover, Christ's going away was expedient for his people; since he went to open the way for them into the holiest of all, by his blood; to take possession of heaven in their name and stead; to prepare mansions of glory for them; to appear in the presence of God for them; to be their advocate, and make intercession for all good things for them; to transact all their business between God and them; to take care of their affairs; to present their petitions; to remove all charges and accusations; and to ask for, and see applied every blessing of grace unto them. The particular instanced in, in the text, of the expediency of it, is the mission and coming of the Spirit:

For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him to you] The Spirit of God in some sense had come, before the death of Christ; he had appeared in the creation of all things out of nothing, as a joint-creator with the Father and Son; he was come as a Spirit of prophecy upon the inspired writers, and others; the Old-Testament saints had received him as a Spirit of faith; he had been given to Christ, as man, without measure, and the disciples had been partakers of his gifts and graces: but he was not come in so peculiar a manner, as he afterwards did; as the promise of the Father, the glorifier of Christ, the comforter of his people, the Spirit of truth, and the reprove of the world. There are reasons to be given, why the Spirit of God should not come in such a manner before, as after the death of Christ. The order of the three divine persons in the Trinity, and in the economy of man's salvation, required such a method to be observed; that the Father should first, and for a while, be more especially manifested; next the Son, and then the Spirit: besides, our Lord has given a reason himself, why the Spirit was not yet given, *because Jesus was not yet glorified*, chapter vii. 39. And the coming of the Spirit as a comforter, and the Spirit of truth, was to be through the intercession, and by the mission of Christ; and therefore it was proper he should go away first, in order to send him: add to all this, that if Christ had not gone away or died, there would have been nothing for the Spirit to have done; no blood to sprinkle; no righteousness to reveal and bring near; no salvation to apply; or any of the things of Christ, and blessings of grace, to have

have taken and shewn; all which are owing to the death of Christ, and which shew the expediency of it: the expediency of Christ's death for the mission of the Spirit to his disciples, is very conspicuous; for hereby they were comforted and supported under a variety of troubles; were led into all truth, and so furnished for their ministerial work; and were made abundantly successful in it, that being attended with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

And when he is come] The coming of the Spirit here, chiefly designs his descent upon the apostles at the day of pentecost; as the things ascribed to him, and which were then done by him, clearly shew; though it may also include his coming along with, and by the ministration of the Gospel, into the hearts of his people at conversion, in all after ages of time:

He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment] By the world is principally meant, the Jews; the world among whom Christ personally was, who knew him not, disbelieved him, rejected him as the Messiah, hated and persecuted him, even unto death; though not to the exclusion of the Gentiles; the whole world that lies in wickedness; since both joined, and were concerned in these things, and reprov'd of them; which reprov'g, as it may respect different persons, may intend both such reproofs and convictions, as are not attended with conversion, and issue in salvation; and such as are powerful, spiritual, and to saving purposes: the several things the Spirit of God is said to reprove of, being repeated in the following verses, with reasons or specifications annexed to them, will be there considered.

9 Of sin, because they believe not on me:

The sin here primarily intended, is that of the Jews, in disbelieving, rejecting, and crucifying Christ; and which the Spirit of God, by Peter, charged upon them on the day of pentecost, and fully proved against them; gave such clear evidence, and wrought such strong convictions of in their minds and consciences, that being pricked to the heart, they cried out, *What shall we do?* Acts ii. 23, 36, 37. though as this passage may be applied to the ordinary work of the Spirit of God upon the souls of men, through the ministry of the word; so it may take in convictions of sin of all sorts, as of original and actual sins, and particularly the sin of unbelief: for the Spirit of

God convinces of the sinfulness and corruption of nature, the wickedness and plague of a man's heart, the sin that dwells in him; how that has overspread all the powers and faculties of his soul, rendered both him and his services unacceptable to God, loathsome in his sight, and himself hopeless and helpless, and deserving of his wrath and displeasure: he also convinces of actual sins and transgressions, shewing that they are breaches of the law of God, and are committed against God himself; that they are deserving of death, even eternal death; that the wrath of God is revealed against them, and for them comes upon the children of disobedience; and that there is no atonement for them, or cleansing from them, but by the blood of Christ: he likewise convinces of the sin of unbelief, here particularly mentioned, shewing the evil nature and consequences of it, to persons enjoying a Gospel-revelation; that such who disbelieve the Messiah, shall die in their sins; that whoever believes not in him shall be damned; and that faith in Christ is necessary to salvation, and that without it there is none.

10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

The righteousness here spoken of, does, in the first sense of the word, design the personal righteousness of Christ. The Jews had traduced him as a wicked man, said he was a sinner himself, and a friend of publicans and sinners; that he was guilty of blasphemy and sedition, maintained a familiarity with Satan, yea, that he had a devil: now the Spirit of God by the mouth of Peter, on the day of pentecost, proved to the conviction of the Jews, that all this was slander; that Christ was an innocent, holy, and righteous person, and a man approved of God among them, as they themselves must be conscious of, Acts ii. 22. of all which, his going to the Father, and being received by him, were a full proof and demonstration. The effusion of the Spirit in that extraordinary manner upon the disciples, shewed that he was gone to the Father, and had received from him the promise of the Holy Ghost, which he then shed abroad; and his going to the Father, and being set down by him at his right hand, made it clear that he came from him, and was no impostor; that he had acted the faithful and upright part, and was free from all the charges the Jews had laid against him. Moreover, this may also be very well understood of the mediatorial righteousness of Christ, which he, as the surety and saviour of his people, was to work out and bring in for them, in obedience to the law of God; which required holiness of nature, perfection of obedience, and bearing its penalty, death; all

all which were complied with by Christ, and so the whole righteousness of the law was fulfilled by him; and which is imputed by God as the justifying righteousness of all that believe in Jesus; and the proof of his having wrought out this, lies in his going to the Father; for as this was the work he came about, the will of his Father he came to do, had he not done it, it is reasonable to think he would never have met with such a welcome from him: besides, the donation of the Spirit, in consequence of its being wrought out, most clearly demonstrates it: likewise in the ordinary work of the Spirit of God upon the souls of his people, he always convinces them of the necessity of a righteousness to justify them before God, to render them acceptable in his sight, and to give them a right to the heavenly glory; for to admit them without a righteousness, or any unrighteous persons there, would be contrary to the justice of God, disagreeable to his pure and holy nature, and destructive of the comfort and happiness of the saints. He, the Spirit of God, convinces men of the insufficiency of their own righteousness for such purposes; that they have no righteousness that deserves the name of one, and that what they have will not justify them before God, and entitle them to heaven: and this he does, by shewing them the corruption of their nature, their daily sins and infirmities, in thought, word, and deed; the purity of the divine perfections, and the spirituality and extensiveness of the law of God; which when a man is thoroughly apprised of, he can never hope for, and expect justification before God by his own righteousness: hence the Spirit of God proceeds to convince men of the glory, excellency, fulness, and suitability of the righteousness of Christ; which he does, by revealing it to them in the Gospel, setting it before them, and working faith in them to lay hold upon it; when they desire to be found in Christ, not having on their own, but his righteousness; which convictions appear by the mean thoughts they have of their own righteoufness, by hungering after Christ's, by disclaiming all but his, by their constant mention of it, dependence on it, and satisfaction in it; and thus to convince of it, is the peculiar work of the Spirit, since naturally men are fond of their own righteousness, are ignorant of Christ's, and set against it. It is added,

And ye see me no more Not but that the disciples were to see Christ, and did see him after his resurrection, and will with the rest of the saints see him at his second coming: but the meaning is, that they should see him no more in a mean and despicable condition on earth, in a state of

humiliation, in the form of a servant; he having faithfully performed the whole work he came about, and particularly that of righteousness he came to bring in.

II Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

This is to be understood of the judiciary power and authority of Christ, who has *all judgment* committed to him by the Father, as mediator; has all power in heaven and in earth; and as he is appointed, so he is a very fit person to judge the world at the last day. Now this being disputed and disbelieved by the Jews, the Holy Ghost in the ministry of Peter, most clearly demonstrated to their full conviction, that he was raised from the dead, set upon his throne, and was made, or declared, Lord and Christ, *Acts* ii. 24, 34—36. of which the pouring forth of the Holy Ghost was an evidence; and the instance in the text proving it, and which is a very considerable one, is the judgment, or condemnation and destruction of Satan, the prince of the world; for Christ, by his death, has destroyed him and his works; has spoiled his principalities and powers; and by his resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven, has carried him and them captive, triumphing over them; and, through the effusion of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, and the power of it attending their ministry, Satan was judged, condemned, and cast out of the heathen world, their temples, and the souls of men; the prey was taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive delivered: but as this may refer to the ordinary work of the Spirit in conviction and conversion, it may be differently applied; for he convinces of various things, which come under this name: he convinces of the wrong judgment which men in a state of nature form of God, whom they take to be such an one as themselves; of a crucified Christ, whom they esteem foolishness; of the doctrines of Christ, which they judge to be absurd and irrational; of the people of Christ, whom they reckon the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things; of the ways and ordinances of Christ, which are thought to be grievous, unpleasant, and unprofitable; and of themselves, and their own state and condition, which they fancy to be good, and they in a fair way for heaven; he also convinces them of the excellency, truth, power, and usefulness of the Gospel, which is called *judgment*, *Isaiah* xlii. 1, 4. and chap. li. 4. so as to understand it truly, believe it cordially, receive it in the love of it, and feel the power of it: he convinces them of a future judgment; of the reality and certainty

of it; that it will be universal, reach to all persons and things; that it will be carried on in the most righteous manner, and there will be no escaping it, of which the judgment and condemnation of Satan is a standing proof; and he moreover convinces of judgment or damnation; that men are under a sentence of condemnation in Adam; that they are liable to eternal damnation in themselves; that except they believe in Christ they will be damned, as sure as the prince of this world is.

12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

[*I have yet, &c.*] Not with respect to the main doctrines of the Gospel, for every thing of this kind he had made known unto them, chapter xv. 15, but what regarded the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles, the abrogation of the Mosaic economy, and settling the Gospel church-state, which were to come to pass after the death and resurrection of Christ, and the sending of the Spirit:

[*But ye cannot bear them now*] Because of their prejudices in favour of their own nation, the law of Moses, and the ceremonies of it, and the setting up of a temporal kingdom.

13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

[*Howbeit, when he the Spirit of truth is come*] Of this character of the Spirit, see chapter xiv. 17. His coming, as before, intends more especially his descent on the apostles at pentecost; though what is here said of him is true of his office, and of his operations on other persons, and at other times:

[*He will guide you into all truth*] Necessary to be known, useful to men, profitable to the churches, even the whole counsel of God; what relates to worship, the nature, form, and spirituality of it, as well as doctrine. He is as a guide, he goes before, leads the way, removes obstructions, opens the understanding, makes things plain and clear, teaches to profit, and leads in the way men should go, without turning to the right hand or left, which, without such a guide, they would be apt to do. The Jews (*c*) have a notion of the Holy Ghost being a guide into all wisdom and knowledge. "R. Phinehas says, The holy Spirit rested upon Joseph from his youth to the day of his death, and guided him into all wisdom, as a

shepherd leads his flock, according to Psalm "lxxx. 2."

[*For he shall not speak of himself*] As Christ, the Son, spoke not of himself in opposition to the Father, so the Spirit speaks not of himself in opposition either to the Father or the Son, but in perfect agreement with both; being, as of the same nature and essence, power and glory, so of the same mind, understanding, and will; and as they agreed and wrought jointly and harmoniously, in the works of nature and providence, so in the economy of grace and salvation.

[*But whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak*] As Christ himself did, chapter xv. 15. and they are such things as ear has not heard besides; what were secretly transacted in the counsel and covenant of peace, and agreed upon by all the three persons; things which concern the salvation of men, the Gospel church-state, another world, and the glory of all the divine persons:

[*And he will shew you things to come*] Which would come to pass after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ; things relating to the state and settlement of the Gospel-church, the partition-wall being broken down, the law of commandments contained in ordinances abolished, and a new face of things appearing in the kingdom and interest of Christ, in consequence of the Spirit being sent forth, and poured down: or this may respect the Spirit of prophecy in the apostles, who shewed to them many things to come in after-ages; as the rise of the man of sin, the great departure from the faith, and decline of the power of godliness in the last days, the calling of the Jews, the destruction of Antichrist, the burning of the world, and the making of new heavens and new earth; and, in short, what would be the state of the church of Christ, and religion, in all the several periods of time, quite down to the coming of Christ, when dead saints shall be raised, and living ones changed, as is declared throughout the book of the Revelation.

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

[*He shall glorify me*] In the ministration of the Gospel, which is the ministration of the Spirit; and asserts Christ to be God over all, to have all that the Father hath, to be possessed of all divine perfections, to have the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him; ascribes the same works and worship to him as to the Father; and, as in a glass, holds him forth to be beheld as the brightness of his glory, and his glory to be seen in it, as the glory of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth: it declares him to be the only Saviour and Redeemer,

Redeemer of lost sinners, that justification is solely by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice; and which ministration the Spirit makes effectual to the bringing of many souls to Christ to believe in him, profess his name, and expect life and salvation from him, by all which he is glorified. Moreover, the Spirit of God glorifies Christ in the experience of the saints, by leading them to him for righteousness, peace, and pardon, for grace, and fresh supplies of it, for wisdom and strength, for food and rest, for life and happiness; and by enabling them to live by faith on him, on whom he has encouraged them to venture, and to whom they have committed their all; and by instructing them to glory in him, as their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; and by ascribing the glory of their salvation to him, and by making continual application to him, under his direction and influence; by leaning on him, and expecting every good thing from him both for time and eternity. The particular instance in which he glorifies Christ, follows,

For he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you] Which is to be understood, not of gifts Christ received from his Father, and which he gives to men by his Spirit; nor of internal grace, as faith, love, &c. which the Spirit from Christ works in the hearts of men; but either of the doctrines of the Gospel, the deep things of God and Christ, which the Spirit searches, and reveals in the ministration of the word. The Gospel is a sort of a *Kabala*, though of a different kind from the Oral law of the Jews. Christ received it from the Father, the Spirit received it from Christ, the Apostles received it from the Spirit, and the Churches of Christ from them in succeeding generations: or this may be understood of the blessings of grace held forth in the Gospel, such as justification, pardon, adoption, &c. which are in Christ, and which the Spirit from Christ takes and shews to the saints, and witnesses their special and particular interest in, and so comforts them, and glorifies Christ.

15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

All things that the Father hath are mine] Though it is true that the same divine nature the Father is possessed of, the Son is; and the same divine perfections belong to the one as to the other; and the Son shares in the same glory and felicity the Father does; so that in the utmost extent of the phrase, all that the Father hath are his; yet since Christ is speaking of things received of him by the Spirit, and shewn unto his people, it rather seems

that the blessings of grace, which the Father has in store for his chosen ones, and the doctrines of grace, those deep things of his, are here more especially meant; which to reveal and apply, is the peculiar work of the Spirit; and in these Christ is equally concerned with the Father:

Therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you] He does not mention the things of the Father, only his own; nor was there any necessity for it, because whatever is his, is the Father's, and whatever the Father has is his: they are jointly concerned in every thing relating to the salvation, benefit, comfort, and happiness of the saints; so that when the Spirit of God takes of the things of the one, he takes of the things of the other, and discovers, and applies them.

16 ¶ A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.

A little while and ye shall not see me] Meaning, that he should be quickly taken from them by death. And in a very little time after this, having put up a prayer for them, recorded in the next chapter, he went into the garden, where he was met by Judas with his band of men, who laid hold on him, bound him, and led him first to Annas, then to Caiaphas, and from him to Pilate, when all his disciples forsook him and fled, and saw him no more in this mortal state, except Peter and John. He took his trial, was soon condemned, and crucified, and laid in the dark tomb, and silent grave, where for awhile he was out of sight.

And again, A little while and ye shall see me] Referring either to his rising again the third day from his death, as was prophesied of, *Hosea vi. 2.* and was typified by Jonas's lying three days and three nights in the whale's belly, when he appeared to, and was seen by his disciples, to their great joy; or else to the short time in which he was to be, and was seen by them; namely, forty days between his resurrection and ascension; a longer stay it was not necessary he should make, for he had other work to do, for himself and them:

Because I go to the Father] To give an account of the work he had finished on earth; to carry in his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; to present himself to his Father on behalf of his people; to appear in the presence of God for them; to be their advocate, plead their cause, and make intercession for them, and take possession of heaven in their name; to take his place at the right hand of God in their nature; to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return.

17 Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto

us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, A little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?

Then said some of his disciples among themselves] It may be, some of them might better understand the meaning of Christ than others, or they might all be ignorant of it; for before the effusion of the Spirit on them, they were attended with a great deal of ignorance; and what through their being overwhelmed at this time with sorrow, and what with their national sentiments they retained about a temporal kingdom, they understood very little of what Christ said to them concerning his death, the nature, use, and end of it. Wherefore some might make the motion first, and inquire,

What is this that he saith unto us, A little while and ye shall not see me?] They knew not what he meant by it, though he had so often, and so clearly spoken of his death unto them: and as ignorant were they what he should design by saying,

And again, A little while and ye shall see me] Though he had expressly told them in so many words, some time ago, that whereas he should die, he should rise again the third day: and as much at a loss were they to guess what he should intend by the reason he gives,

And, Because I go to the Father] Though he had often mentioned it already, and as what might be matter of joy unto them.

18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith.

They said therefore] One, and all of them; the inquiry became universal;

What is this that he saith, A little while?] It seems as if this phrase was the most intricate and perplexing to them; for whatever conceptions they might have of not seeing, and seeing him again, as expressive of his going from them, and returning to them; yet they had no notion at all what he should mean by *a little while*: and therefore add,

We cannot tell what he saith] They knew his words, but not his meaning.

19 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, A little while, and ye shall see me?

Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him] This is a proof of Christ's Deity, that he is the omniscient God who knows all things, what is in man, even the secrets of the heart; for he not only

knew the whisperings of the disciples, and their inquiries among themselves about the sense of his words, but also their secret desires to ask him concerning it:

And said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while and ye shall not see me: and again, A little while and ye shall see me?] Which he said before they could put the question to him, they being bashful, and backward through fear or shame; and which not only confirms what is before observed of his omniscience, but also shows his readiness to open his mind and meaning, and explain himself to his disciples, as he does in the following words.

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

Verily, verily, I say unto you] A strong asseveration, a way of speaking often used by him, when he solemnly affirms any thing, and would assure us of the truth of it, as here:

That ye shall weep and lament] Meaning at his death, when he should be removed from them, so that they should not see him; when they should be filled with inward grief on account thereof, and express it by mournful gestures, and a doleful voice; and which was fulfilled in them, *Mark xvi. 10.* and how pensive the two disciples were that were going to Emmaus, it is easy to observe from the account given of them:

But the world shall rejoice] The unbelieving Jews; and not only the common people, but the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked at him, insulted him, and triumphed over him when on the cross, being glad at heart they had got him there; imagining now, that it was all over, the day was their own, and they should be no more disturbed by Christ and his followers:

And ye shall be sorrowful] Christ repeats it again, and uses a variety of words to express the greatness of their sorrow, and the many ways in which they would signify it:

But your sorrow shall be turned into joy] As it was, when he was raised from the dead, which was so wonderful and surprising to them, that for joy they could scarce believe their own eyes; it being a mercy unexpected, though they had been told of it, and too great for them to enjoy; yea, that very thing which was the occasion of their sorrow, became the foundation of their joy; namely, the death of Christ, salvation, and all the benefits and blessings of grace coming to them in this way.

21 A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow] As was said she should have, *Genesis* iii. 16. This is God's ordination and appointment for sin:

Because her hour is come] Is at hand; the fixed time in nature is up, and there is no avoiding it:

But as soon as she is delivered of the child] For though the sorrow is great, yet there is a deliverance, and she is saved in child-bearing: when

She remembereth no more the anguish] The sharp pains she has endured in her travail;

For joy that a man is born into the world] Much such a way of speaking is used by the Jews (d), who observe, that "If a woman brings forth a male child, all is forgot, and she repents (that is of her impatience, or any unbecoming expression in the time of labour) בשמחה וזכר בשר" for the joy of a man-child." And our Lord seems to have respect to a prevailing notion among them, as well as many others, of the felicity of male children: it is a common saying with them (e), "Blessed is he whose children are males, and wo to him whose children are females:" for they say (f), "When, שבא זכר בעולם," that a man-child comes into the world, peace comes into the world." Now our Lord, by this instance, illustrates the sorrow his disciples should have by his departure, and the joy that they should be possessed of upon his return to them; that as the pains of a woman in travail are very sharp and severe, and the distress of her mind, about the issue of things respecting herself and offspring, is very great, so would be the grief and trouble of the disciples on account of the death of their Lord and Master; but as when a woman is safely delivered of a man-child, she is so filled with joy that her sorrow is remembered no more; so should it be with them, when Christ should appear to them; all their trouble, concern, anxiety of mind, and fears that attended them, would all vanish away, and they be distressed with them no more.

22 And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

And ye now therefore have sorrow] This is the application of the preceding case. As it is with a

woman in travail, when her hour is come, so it was now with them, and would be when Christ was removed from them; and as it is with every believer, when Christ is absent: for though there are many things that cause sorrow now, as sin, Satan, and afflictive dispensations of providence, yet nothing more sensibly touches believers to the quick, and gives them more uneasiness, than when Christ is out of sight: the reasons are, because he is so nearly related to them, being their everlasting father, kind husband, loving brother, and faithful friend; and because they are so strongly affected to him, there is none like him in their esteem in heaven and in earth: he is the person whom their souls love; he is the very life of their souls; his favour, his gracious presence is life to them, and his absence is as death; nor can they be easy, but are restless, and upon the inquiry after him, until he returns to them, which he does in his own time; and therefore this sorrow is but now, for the present, it is not perpetual.

But I will see you again] As he did see his disciples upon his resurrection once and again, for the space of forty days, at certain times, by intervals: and so, in a spiritual sense, he comes and sees his people, makes them a visit, manifests himself unto them, and abides with them: they are always under his omniscient eye; he always sees them as God; and they are always under his eye of love, grace, and mercy, as mediator: but this means such a seeing of them, as that they see him as well as he sees them; and is expressive of a delightful intercourse between Christ and them, than which nothing is more desirable:

And your heart shall rejoice] As did the hearts of the disciples, when they saw Christ risen from the dead; and as the hearts of believers do, when Christ so looks upon them that they can view him with an eye of faith; such a sight is a heart-rejoicing one. To see the glory and beauty of Christ's person, the fulness and suitableness of him as a saviour; to have an appropriating view of him as such; or to see him so as to have sensible communion with him, must needs fill the heart of a believer with joy unspeakable and full of glory: such a sight of Christ will rejoice the heart under a sense of sin, the pollution and guilt of it, when tempted by Satan, or under God's afflicting hand, and even in the view of death and eternity.

And your joy no man taketh from you] The joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment, and the joy of the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees, was a short-lived one, on account of Christ's death; for Jesus was soon raised from the dead, and the apostles were filled with the Spirit, and went forth boldly preaching in the name of Christ, to the great grief

(d) Tzeror Hammor, fol. 98. 2. (e) T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 65. 1. Kiddushin, fol. 82. 2. Bava Bathra, fol. 16. 2. Sanhedrim, fol. 100. 2. (f) T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 31. 2.

grief of these men. But the joy of the disciples was durable; their risen Lord would never die more; the blessings of grace, such as redemption, pardon, righteousness, and atonement, would, and do ever remain as the foundation of solid joy: nor could a stranger intermeddle with it; *adus, not one*, either man or devil could take it away, not by all the reproaches they could cast upon them, or persecutions they could follow them with: and so, though a believer's joy may be damped by sin, and Satan, and the world, it may not be always in lively exercise; yet the matter of it always remains in Christ, and the principle of it in themselves can never be destroyed, but will issue in everlasting joy in another world.

23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

And in that day ye shall ask me nothing] Meaning, not the whole Gospel-dispensation, so often called in prophetic language, *that day*; and is, in the New Testament opposed to the *night* of Jewish and Gentile darkness; and in comparison of the former dispensation, is a time of great spiritual light and knowledge: nor the latter part of that day, when there will be no night of darkness and desertion, of error and severity, of affliction and persecution, with the church; when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord; when all the children of God shall be taught of him, and there will be no need to say, Know the Lord, for all shall know him, from the least to the greatest: nor the day of judgment, which, by way of emphasis, is so frequently called *that day*: nor the state of ultimate happiness, the everlasting day of glory; when all imperfections shall be done away, when saints will know, as they are known, and see Jesus as he is, and need not ask any questions about him: but the time when Christ and his apostles should meet again, and see each other's faces with joy and pleasure, is meant; and the time following thereon, especially the day of pentecost, when the Spirit was poured down upon them, and, according to his promise, came to them, taught them all things, and led them into all truth. This asking is not to be understood of asking in prayer; for it appears, by what follows, that they should ask in his name then, and he encourages to it; but of asking him questions, and that not of any sort; for it is certain, that, within this time, they did ask many things. Peter asked what John, the beloved disciple, should do; and they all asked him, a little before his ascension, whether he would at that time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

but it is to be restrained to such things as they had been, or were desirous of asking him; such as, Whither goest thou? Shew us the Father? How is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not unto the world? And more especially these last questions, they greatly desired to put to him, *What is this, A little while and ye shall not see me? and what is this, A little while and ye shall see me?* And what is the meaning of these words, *Because I go to the Father?* Now our Lord intimates, that at this time all these things would be so clear and evident to them, that they should ask him no questions about them. But he adds,

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you] Asking here signifies prayer, and a different word is here used than before. The object of prayer is the Father, though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit, who were both separately, or in conjunction with the Father, prayed unto after this; see *Acts* vii. 59. and chap. xxii. 16. *2 Thess.* iii. 5. *Rom.* i. 7. *1 Cor.* i. 2, 3. *Rev.* i. 4, 5. The medium of access to the Father is the name of Christ; he is the mediator between God and man, the way of access unto him; whatever is asked, is to be asked on account of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, and then there is no doubt of success; whatever is asked will be given; his blood within the vail speaks loud for every blessing; his righteousness God is always well pleased with; his sacrifice is a sweet-smelling savour; his mediation is powerful: and his name is always prevalent.

24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name] Not that they had never prayed as yet; for they had desired him to teach them to pray, which he did: they had prayed to him particularly for an increase of faith, and for many other things; but either they had only asked him, he being present with them, and not the Father; or if they had asked the Father any thing, yet not in the name of Christ: they had made no mention of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, nor any use of his mediation; things they had not as yet such clear knowledge of; or they had not asked as yet any extraordinary thing, as they afterwards did; see *Acts* iv. 29, 30.

Ask, and ye shall receive] That is, in my name, and whatever ye ask for, ye shall have it, to fit you for your work, to carry you through it, and to give you success in it; see *Matt.* vii. 7.

That your joy may be full] Go cheerfully through your work, find much pleasure in it, and with great satisfaction see the Gospel spread, souls converted,

verted, Satan's kingdom weakened, and the interest of your redeemer thrive and flourish; than which nothing can more contribute to complete the joy of the ministers of Christ.

25 These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.

These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs] Concerning his Father, and his Father's house, and the many mansions in it, of his going to prepare a place for them there, and of the way unto it, all which they seemed not to understand; of the nature of communion with him and his Father, and of the manifestation of them to them, so as not unto the world, which they could not account for; of their union to him under the simile of the vine and its branches; and of his departure from them, and return unto them; and of the sorrow that should follow upon the one, and the joy that should attend the other, set forth in the case of a woman in travail, having sorrow, and being joyful when delivered. All which, one would think, were plain and easy to be understood; but such was the then present state and case of the disciples, that these all seemed as proverbs, parables, and dark sayings, which they did not clearly understand: wherefore our Lord says,

The time cometh] Meaning either the time of his appearing unto them after his resurrection, or the day of pentecost:

When I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father] By pouring forth his Spirit upon them, who should not only take of his things, but of his Father's also, and shew them unto them clearly and plainly; so as that they should have a clear understanding of them, as they were capable of; of the perfections of his nature, his distinct personality, his being the Father of Christ, and of all the elect in him; of his everlasting love to their persons; of his choice of them in Christ; of his covenant with them in him; of his mind and will concerning them, and his gracious designs towards them; of his Father's house, and the way to it; and of the nature, design, and usefulness of his going to him; of the distinction between speaking in parables and dark sayings, and speaking plainly, openly, and apparently; see *Numb. xii. 8.*

26 At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

At that day ye shall ask in my name] For when the Spirit was poured upon them, they not only

received his extraordinary gifts, and had a larger measure of his grace bestowed upon them; but were also blessed with him, as a Spirit of grace and supplication, in a more remarkable manner than ever they had been before: they then better understood the throne of grace, and the advantages of it; had greater enlargements and assistances at it; and were better acquainted with the mediation of Christ, and the necessity of making use of his name, blood, and righteousness, in all their petitions and requests.

And I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you] This Christ had promised before, *John xiv. 16.* nor was there any occasion to repeat it now, of which they might be strongly assured; besides, at that day the Spirit would be given to them by virtue of his intercession; so that there would be no need of praying to the Father for them on that account. This is said, not as if the intercession of Christ for his people would then cease; for he is always their advocate with the Father, and ever lives to make intercession for them; though it may not be carried on in the same manner, by prayer, as when he was here on earth, his personal appearance, and the presentation of his blood, sacrifice, and righteousness being sufficient; but to declare the disposition and readiness of his Father to hear them, and grant unto them whatsoever they should ask of him in his name.

27 For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

For the Father himself loveth you] The Father loved them as well, and as much as the Son did, and of himself too, without any merit or motive in them: he loved them from everlasting, and had given proofs of it in time, in the gift of his Son to them, and for them, and in calling them by his grace; and therefore being thus strongly affected to them, they might depend upon a ready and speedy answer from him, as might be best for his glory, and their good.

Because ye have loved me] Not that their love to Christ was the cause of the Father's love to them; but, on the contrary, the Father's love to them was the cause of their love to Christ; and therefore as the cause is known by its effect, they might be assured of the Father's love to them by their love to Christ; for if the Father had not loved them, they had never loved God, nor Christ; but since they did love Christ, it was a clear case the Father loved them: and this their love is joined with faith;

And

And have believed that I came out from God] Being sent by him, and am no impostor, but the true Messiah that was to come: faith in Christ, and love to him, go together; where the one is, there is the other, faith works by love; they are both the gifts of God's grace, and the fruits and effects of his everlasting love; and those who are possessed of them may be firmly persuaded of their interest therein.

28 I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

I came forth from the Father] This is the sum of what the apostles believed, and Christ, in these discourses of his, had been speaking of. This his coming forth from the Father is to be understood, not of his eternal filiation; nor of his coming forth in a way of grace towards his own people in the counsel and covenant of grace and peace; nor of his constitution, as mediator, from everlasting; but of his coming in the flesh in the fulness of time: which supposes that he was, that he existed as a divine person before; that he was with the Father before; that he came forth from him with his knowledge, mind, and will; he came not of himself, but he sent him; and yet he came willingly, was not forced, or did not come against his will: and this does not suppose any local motion, or change of place, but only intends an assumption of the human nature into unity with his divine person, who fills heaven and earth with his presence; nor any separation from his Father, with whom he was, and in whose bosom he lay when he was made flesh, and dwelt among men; nor any absence from heaven, for he was there when on earth.

And am come into the world] Where he was before, as the creator and upholder of it, by his immensity and powerful presence: this designs his coming and manifestation in the flesh, which in general was to do the whole will of God, which he in counsel and covenant agreed to do, and for which he came down from heaven; and in particular to preach the Gospel, call sinners to repentance, give light and life to many; and to fulfil the law, by obeying its precepts, and bearing its penalty, and both to do and suffer in the room and stead of his people, and to save lost sinners, even the chief of them.

Again, I leave the world] Not that he relinquished the sustentation and government of it, as God, nor the care of his people in it, as mediator, for whom he retains the same love as ever, and will not leave them fatherless and comfortless; nor was he so leaving it as never to return more;

for he will descend in like manner as he ascended, and will come a second time and judge the world in righteousness: but he was about to depart from it by death, having done the work and business which he came about.

And go to the Father] To give an account of his work unto him, as his righteous servant, being faithful to him that had appointed him; and to transact the affairs of his people; to appear in the presence of God for them; to present their petitions, be their advocate, make intercession for them, take possession of heaven in their name, and prepare it for them; to take his place at the right hand of God in human nature, and to be glorified with the glory promised him before the world was.

29 ¶ His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.

His disciples said unto him] Upon the above discourse of Christ, such rays and beams of light darted into the minds of the apostles, and things stood so clear in their view, and they so well understood what Christ had said, that they declare,

Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb] What he had said before, were to them like proverbial, or parabolical expressions, not easy to be understood; they were like enigmas, riddles, and dark sayings, the meaning of which they could not apprehend; but now they observe, with admiration, that what he delivered was plain, and intelligible; which was not so much owing to Christ's different way of speaking now from what it was before, as to their former dullness of hearing, and now having some further degree of light given unto them.

30 Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.

Now are we sure that thou knowest all things] Not only all men, but all things, even the secrets of mens hearts, of which the apostles had now a convincing proof; for whereas Christ had delivered some expressions, *ψ. 16.* which they did not understand, and were desirous to ask him the meaning of, *ψ. 19.* which he knowing, being God omniscient, prevents their putting the question to him, and enters upon a discourse, in which he so clearly explained what they wanted to be informed of, without their asking him, that they were fully assured that he must know all things; and, as they add,

Needest not that any man should ask thee] The meaning is, that should Christ deliver any thing
not

not so intelligible to any of his audience, and they were desirous of knowing the sense of it, there would be no need of putting the question in form to him, since he is privy to the first motion of desire rising up in the mind; and can, and will, if he thinks fit, explain himself on such an head, to the satisfaction of the person, without ever asking him; at least there is no need of putting the question to make him acquainted with his desire, this being before known to him.

By this we believe that thou comest forth from God.] Was the true Messiah, and had his mission and commission from God, as such; doubtless they believed this before, but this instance of Christ's omniscience was a strengthening proof of it. So Nathanael, by Christ's saying to him, that before Philip called him, and when he was under the fig-tree, he saw him, when he thought no eye did but an omniscient one; it laid him under such full convictions of him, as at once to acknowledge him the Son of God, the King of Israel. This is one of the signs and characters of the Messiah with the Jews, that he should have a discerning spirit of men and things, according to *Isaiah xi. 3 (g)*.

31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

Not as calling their faith in question; or as denying they had any; or as despising it for the smallness of it; but as reproving them for their security, vain confidence and boasting, as if their faith was so very strong that it would never be moved; and perhaps for the lateness of it too: the words may be read affirmatively, without an interrogation, *Ye do believe now*; they are in the Syriac and Arabic versions read imperatively, "believe ye now?" Though the *now* is left out by the former, which is not to be spared, for the emphasis lies on it; and a regard seems to be had both to time past and to come. The words carry in them a tacit reproof, that they believed no sooner, or were not before this time more established in their faith, when he had been so long with them, and they had heard so many discourses from him, and had seen so many miracles wrought by him: however, it was not too late, and they would do well to go on believing; but it is suggested to them they would meet with something that would try their faith: and it is as if Christ had said, "Ye believe in me now, while I am with you, and all things go according to your mind; but what will you do anon, when I shall be taken from you, be apprehended by mine enemies, be delivered into the hands of the Gentiles,

be crucified, die, and be laid in the grave? will ye believe then? One of you will betray me, another deny me, and all will forsake me, and some express their doubts about me."

32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come.] The time is at hand, yea, it may, in a sense, be said to be already come, it was within an hour: and indeed the following prayer might be delivered in less than an hour's time; when he went immediately into the garden, and was apprehended; or at least in a very little while it would come to pass,

That ye shall be scattered, every man to his own.] To his own friends, relations, and acquaintance; to his own house and home; to his own country, Galilee, whither they all went, and to their trade of fishing again; see *John xxi. 1.* and so was fulfilled the prophecy in *Zech. xiii. 7.*

And shall leave me alone.] As they did in the hands of his enemies; for they all forsook him and fled, some one way, some another; though one or two of them, Peter and John, followed him at a distance; and all came together again, but not to Christ, until his resurrection from the dead.

And yet I am not alone.] He was not alone at this time; and his meaning is, that he should not be alone then when they should be scattered from him:

Because the Father is with me.] Not only as the Son of God, by virtue of union to him, and as one with him; but as mediator, in consequence of his promise to uphold him, and assist him in his human nature; and though he withdrew his gracious and comforting presence from him, he bearing the sins, and standing in the room and stead of his people, yet not his powerful and supporting presence.

33 These things have I spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

These things have I spoken unto you.] As this is the conclusion of our Lord's sermon to his disciples, these words may well enough be thought to have regard to all that he had said in general; as concerning his departure from them; his going to prepare a place for them; his union to them, and their communion with him; and the various persecutions and afflictions they should endure for his

(g) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 93. 2.

his sake; and the many blessings both of grace and glory they should enjoy; and particularly what he had said in the context, concerning their forsaking him; which supposed tribulation, and would be a prelude of what they were afterwards to have in the world; and concerning the presence of his Father with him, and which they might also expect to have:

[That in me ye might have peace] Not in the world, in which they were to have tribulation: there is no true, solid peace to be enjoyed in the world, and the things of it; the world can neither give it, nor take it away; nor have the men of it any knowledge and understanding of it; and much less enjoy it: nor in themselves; spiritual peace does not arise from any duties, services, and performances of men; no, not from an attendance on the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; nor even from the graces of the Spirit; for though peace may be enjoyed herein, and hereby, and through these, as means; yet does it not come from them but from Christ, in whose strength alone all duties are performed aright; who is the sum and substance of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, and the object of all grace: it is in him, and in him only, in his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, which speak peace, pardon, and atonement, that a soul finds any true, solid peace, rest, comfort, and joy; and here he may, and does find it, in opposition to the cry of sin, law, and justice, for wrath, ruin, hell, and damnation. There is a peace by Christ, which he has made for his people by the blood of his cross; and there is a peace in him, which is enjoyed through faith's looking to his blood for pardon, to his righteousness for justification, to his sacrifice for atonement and satisfaction; and by having communion with him, and discoveries of his love, and by seeing safety and security in him.

[In the world ye shall have tribulation] This is certain from this declaration of Christ, who is the omniscient God, and truth itself; from the instance and example of Christ, who was all his life a man of sorrows; from the conformity of the members to the head; from the divine appointment that has so determined it; from the natural enmity of the world to the saints; from the experience of the people of God in all ages; from the usefulness of tribulation to try the graces, and bring about the temporal, spiritual, and eternal good of believers: and though they have tribulation in the world, yet not by way of punishment for sin, but as fatherly corrections and chastenings for their good, that they may not be condemned with the world; and it is only in this present world they have it; as soon as they have done with the world, they will have done with tribulation:

But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world] It is very observable how the phrase, *in the world ye shall have tribulation*, stands, and is encompassed, before, with these words, *that in me ye might have peace*, and behind, with these, *be of good cheer*, &c. Believers, of all men, notwithstanding their tribulation, have reason to be of good cheer, since their sins are forgiven, the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts, their redemption draws nigh, and they have hopes of glory; and particularly, because as Christ here says, for their encouragement under all their tribulations in this world, *I have overcome the world*: Satan, the god and prince of the world, with all his principalities and powers, which Christ has led captive, ransomed his people from, and delivers them from the power of; and all that is in the world, the lusts and sins of it; their damning power, by the sacrifice of himself, and their governing power, by his Spirit and grace; and the men of the world, with all their rage and fury, whom he has trodden down in his anger, restrains by his power, and causes the remainder of their wrath to praise him. In all which conquests he makes his people share, and even makes them more than conquerors, through himself: so that they have nothing to fear from the world; nor any reason to be cast down by the tribulation they meet with in it.

CHAP. XVII.

In this chapter we find Christ preparing himself for death; he prayeth his Father to glorify him, and to give eternal life to all believers, §. 1—3. Sheweth how faithfully he accomplished his work, §. 4—8. and prayeth for his disciples, that he would preserve them in love, and keep them from the evil of this world, §. 9—19. prayeth for all them that would believe on him through their word, §. 20—23. and that they might be with him to behold his glory, §. 24—26.

THESE words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

[These words spake Jesus] Referring to his sermons and discourses, his words of comfort, advice, direction, and instruction, delivered in the three preceding chapters:

And lifted up his eyes to heaven] The seat of the divine Majesty, the throne of his Father. This is a prayer-gesture. It is said (a) of R. Tanchuma, "That הגביר מנין לשמים" "he lifted up his face to heaven," and said before the holy

(a) Vajikra Rabba, §. 34. fol. 174. 4.

"blessed

“blessed God, Lord of the world, &c.” and this is expressive of the ardency and affection of the mind of Christ, and of his confidence of the divine favour: it shews that his mind was filled with devotion and faith, and was devoid of shame and fear, and was possessed of great freedom, boldness, and intrepidity.

And said, Father] Or “my Father,” as the Syriac, Arabic and Persian versions read; and no doubt but he used the word *Abba*, which signifies “my Father,” thereby claiming his interest in him, and relation to him:

The hour is come] To depart out of the world, to suffer and die for his people, which was agreed upon between him and his Father from all eternity; and it was welcome to him, on account of the salvation of his people, and therefore he spoke with an air of pleasure and satisfaction; and it would be quickly over, it was but an hour, as it were, though a time of great trouble, distress and darkness, and so a fit time for prayer:

Glorify thy Son] As man and mediator; for as God, he needed no glory, nor could any be added to him: but it designs some breakings-forth of glory upon him at his death; by supporting him under all the sorrows and sufferings of it; and in carrying him through it; so that he conquered all his peoples enemies, and his own, sin, Satan, the world, and death, and obtained eternal redemption for them: and at his resurrection; by not suffering him to remain so long in the grave as to see corruption; and by raising him at the exact time that was foretold by the prophets and himself; and by sending an angel to roll away the stone; and by raising some of the saints along with him; and by putting such a glory on his body, as that it is the pattern and exemplar of the saints resurrection: and at his ascension to heaven, when he led captivity captive; and at his session at the right hand of God, above all principalities and powers; and through the effusion of the Spirit upon his disciples, and the divine power that attended his Gospel, to make it effectual to great multitudes, both to Jews and Gentiles; by all which he was glorified, pursuant to this petition of his; in which his end is,

That thy Son also may glorify thee] As he had done throughout the whole of his life and conversation, and by his ministry and miracles; so now at his sufferings and death, through the salvation of his chosen ones, in which the wisdom, grace, justice, holiness, power, and faithfulness of God are greatly glorified; and in the after-discharge of other branches of his mediatorial office, in making intercession for his people, in the ministry of his word and ordinances by his

servants, attended with his holy Spirit, and by the administration of his kingly office.

2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

As thou hast given him power over all flesh] All men, in distinction from angels; and these as fallen, as weak, frail, sinful and mortal creatures; men of every nation, Jew or Gentile, and of every character, elect or non-elect. Not but that he has also a power over angels; nor is his power over men limited to their flesh or bodies; but reaches to their spirits or souls also: which power is a governing, disposing, and judicial one; he rules them with a sceptre of righteousness, he disposes of them in providence as he pleases, and will judge them at the last day: and this is a power that is given him by his Father, and is not that original power over all things he has as God, and the creator of them, which is natural, essential, and underived; but is a derived and delegated power, which he has as mediator, as subservient to the ends and designs of his office: and as God glorified him as such, by giving him this power; so he glorifies him again, by acknowledging it, and by using it for the end for which it is given:

That he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him] Eternal life is a gift, and not owing to the merits of men; indeed there is no merit in mens works, no not in the best; for these are previously due to God, cannot be profitable to him, if done aright; are not done in the creature's strength, but through the grace of God, and bear no proportion to eternal life; which is in Christ's gift: not only the promise of it is in him, but that itself; it is put into his hands, and he came into this world that his people might have it; he has procured it, and has removed what lay in the way of their enjoyment of it; he has a right to bestow it, and their right unto it comes by him, through his blood and righteousness: the persons on whom he confers this gift are not all men, but such as the Father in the everlasting covenant has given to him, as his people and portion, his spouse and children, his jewels and his treasure, to be saved and enjoyed by him; whom he has chosen and preserved in him, and made his care and charge; to these, and every one of these, Christ gives this great blessing; nor shall any of them come short of it; and it is for the sake of this, that all creatures and things, all power in heaven and in earth are given to him.

3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

And this is life eternal] That is, the beginning and pledge of it, the way unto it, and means of it, and what will certainly issue in it:

That they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent] The knowledge of God, here spoken of, is not the knowledge of him by the light of nature, and works of creation; for a man may know God in this sense, and not know him in Christ, nor any thing of Christ; yea, may know God and profess him in words, and in works deny him, as the heathens did; nor is eternal life known hereby, nor connected with it: nor is it such a knowledge of God as is to be obtained by the law of Moses, in which God is represented as a righteous and incensed being; nor is there in it any discovery of God, as a God of love, grace, and mercy in Christ; nor any revelation of a Mediator, Saviour and Redeemer; nor can it either shew, or give to persons eternal life; and yet what is here said of the knowledge of God and Christ, the Jews say of the law (b). More truly does Philo the Jew say (c), that "Fleeing to the divine being, is eternal life; and running from him is death." But this is to be understood of an evangelical knowledge of God, as the God and Father of Christ, as the God of all grace, pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin; and of Christ the mediator; not a general, notional, and speculative knowledge; but a practical and experimental one; a knowledge of approbation and appropriation; a fiducial one, whereby a soul believes in Christ, and trusts in his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice for salvation; and which, though imperfect, is progressive. The Arians and Unitarians urge this text, against the true and proper Deity of our Lord Jesus, and his equality with the Father, but without success; since the Father is called the only true God, in opposition to the many false gods of the heathens, but not to the exclusion of the Son or Spirit; for Christ is also stiled the one Lord, and only Lord God, but not to the exclusion of the Father; yea the true God and eternal life: was he not, he would never, as here, join himself with the only true God; and besides, eternal life is made to depend as much upon the knowledge of him, as of the Father. The reason of this different mode of expression, is owing to the character of Christ as mediator, who is said to be sent by the only true God, about the business of man's salvation. Nor is it of any moment what the Jew (d) objects, that Jesus here confesses, that the true God is only one God; nor does he call himself God, only the Messiah sent by God; and that the apostle Paul also asserts the unity of

God, 1 Tim. i. 17. and therefore Jesus cannot be God: for Christ and his Father, the only true God, are one; and that he is the one true God with his Father, he tacitly suggests here by joining himself with him; and what the apostle Paul says of the one and only wise God, may as well be understood of Christ, the Son of God, as of the Father; since all the characters in the text agree with him, and of him he had been speaking in the context.

4 I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

I have glorified thee on the earth] This is made use of as a reason and argument why the Father should glorify him: Christ glorified his Father personally, as he held forth and expressed the glory of his person; and verbally, by ascribing, on all occasions, praise and glory to him; and really, or by deeds, and that by various ways: as in and by his ministry; by asserting he had his mission, qualifications and doctrine, from him as a prophet; his principal work was to declare his Father's mind and will, his love and grace; nor did he seek his own, but his Father's glory: and by his miracles; for though these were proofs of his Deity and Messiahship, and displays of his own glory; yet the glory of his Father, especially of his power, was eminently seen in them, for he referred them to him; and these were often the means of men glorifying the God of Israel: and by his whole life and conversation, which was entirely according to the will of God; and every action of it was directed to his glory; particularly he glorified him by his early regard to his will, and the business he sent him about; by his zeal for his Father's house; and by the exercise of the various graces of faith, hope, and love upon him: and as by his life, so at his death, even all the while he was on the earth; where God had been dishonoured by the sin of men; where Christ now was debased in human nature, and even that was for the glory of God; and this is said in distinction from heaven, where God is glorified by the angels, and where Christ would shortly be glorified in his human nature:

I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do] By the work is meant obedience to the will of God; the destruction of all spiritual enemies, as sin, Satan, the world and death; and the redemption and salvation of his people, which was given him to do: he did not take it upon himself, but being called to it he readily accepted of it; it was appointed, and cut out for him, in the counsel and covenant of grace; he was thoroughly acquainted

(b) T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 21. 1.

(c) De profugis, p. 461.

(d) R. Isaac Chiazuk Emuna, par. 2, c. 55. p. 445.

quainted with it; and though it was difficult, it was pleasant and delightful to him; nor did he leave it till he could say *it is finished*; as it was, by himself alone, without the help of man; and is so compleat that nothing can be added to it; and so firmly done, that it cannot be unravelled by men or devils: he speaks of it as done, because the time was come to finish it, and he was sure of the accomplishment of it.

5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self] Not with his perfections, these he had, they dwelt bodily in him; nor with his nature, in which he was one with him; but, as Mediator, with his glorious presence in heaven, by setting him at his right hand, and crowning him with glory and honour. The Jews have a notion that God will give to the king Messiah, של מלך מן הכבוד “of the supreme glory (e):” the glory Christ prays for is, he says,

With the glory which I had with thee before the world was] The same phrase with לעולם or עולם קודם used by the Jews (f). This is not to be understood of the glory of the human nature of Christ, abstractly considered; for that is no person of itself, but what is taken up into personal union with the Son of God; and therefore cannot be intended by his personal character, I; nor did it exist from eternity; it was indeed written in God’s book of predestination, even all its members, when as yet there were none of them in actual being; it was set up in God’s thoughts and counsel, as the pattern and exemplar of human nature; it had a federal union with the Son of God, or a covenant-subsistence with him; and in the Old Testament Christ was often spoken of as man, because of his frequent appearances in an human form, and because of the certainty of his incarnation; but he did not really and actually exist as man, until he took flesh of the virgin; for Christ, as man, is the seed of the woman, the son of David, Abraham, and Adam; he is called the *last* and *second Adam*, and was not, as man, before the first: the Old Testament speaks of his incarnation as future; nor is it possible that a creature can exist before time; for as soon as a creature exists, time begins, which is nothing else than the measure of a creature’s duration; nor was the human nature of Christ with the Father from eternity; nor had it a glory before the world began, neither in whole, nor in part: nor is the

glory of the divine nature abstractly considered here meant; this glory indeed Christ had from everlasting; he had it with his Father, in common with him, being in union to him; and it is true that it was in some measure veiled and covered in his state of humiliation; for though there were some breakings-forth of it in that state, these were seen but by a few; wherefore he is thought by some to pray here for the manifestation of this glory; but this glory was essential to him, was his natural right, and not to be prayed for, and which he then had as much as ever, and of which there could be no suspension: but this designs the glory of him as God-man, and mediator; he was not only predestinated to be a mediator, but was really set up as such from everlasting, and had a mediatorial fulness of grace put into his hands, and had the honour and glory of that office given unto him by the other two persons: and now that he might appear to be what he was, to be made, that is, made manifest that he was both Lord and Christ, he here prays; which was to be done upon his ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God, by the pouring down of the holy Ghost.

6 ¶ I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

I have manifested thy name] However, not any mere name is here meant; but either God himself, or the perfections of his nature, or his will of command, or rather his Gospel; unless Christ himself, or his name Jesus, God by the angel gave him, and in whose name there is salvation, and no other can be thought to be meant; and which, as it was manifested to his disciples, so it is to all whom God has chosen and given to Christ:

Unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world] Which is to be understood, not merely of their being given to him as apostles, nor of their being given and brought to him in effectual vocation only, but of an eternal act of God in election, and in the covenant of grace; when these persons were given to Christ as his spouse, his spiritual seed and offspring, the sheep of his pasture, and his portion and inheritance, to be saved and preserved by him; which, as it is an instance of love and care on God’s part to give, and of grace and condescension on Christ’s to receive, so of distinguishing goodness, to the persons given; since not all the world, but some of it, share in this favour:

Thine they were, and thou gavest them me] The persons given were not the Father’s merely by creation;

(e) Midrash Talmim in Psal. 20. apud Galatin. de arcen. cathol. ver. 1. 3. c. 9. (f) Gloss, in T. Bab. Pefachim, fol. 54. 1.

creation; for so others are his also; nor would they be peculiarly his, for they are the sons likewise in this sense; but they are his by electing grace, which is the peculiar act of the Father in Christ, and is unto salvation by him, through the sanctification of the Spirit; these are chosen to be his peculiar people, and given to Christ as such:

And they have kept thy word] The Gospel, not only in their memories, but in their hearts; and having publicly professed it, they defended it valiantly against the enemies of it, and kept it pure and incorrupt; this shews that the gospel is meant by the name of God manifested to these persons.

7 Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

Now they have known] The Syriac version reads it, *כִּי* "I have known;" and so the Perfic and Gothic versions, contrary to most copies and other versions, which read, as we render, *they have known*; that is, the disciples and apostles of Christ:

That all things whatsoever thou hast given me] All temporal things, the world and the fulness of it; all power in heaven and in earth, or a power of disposing of all things for his own service, as mediator; all spiritual things, the covenant of grace, with all its blessings and promises, the Spirit of God, with all his gifts and graces, a fulness of all grace for his people, yea, eternal life and glory; and every thing relating to his mediatorial office and character, power to perform miracles, knowledge and wisdom to preach the Gospel, strength to procure the salvation of his people; every thing to qualify him for the government of the church and the judgment of the world:

Are of thee] Owing to his good will and pleasure, by his appointment and constitution, as an instance of love to him, and that he might, as man, and mediator, be honoured, and in all things have the preeminence, and all for the good of his chosen ones. Now the knowledge of this by his disciples, must greatly confirm the mission of Christ, render him very suitable to them, cause them to entertain a greater esteem for him, lead them into some admiring views of the grace of God, in giving so much into Christ's hands for them, and engage them the more cheerfully to obey his commands.

8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

For I have given unto them the words] Not commands, but doctrines; and these not the doctrines

of men; nor any of the divers and strange doctrines; but what are called in scripture the doctrine of God, of Christ, of the apostles, are agreeable to the scriptures, and according to godliness; and are styled the word of truth, of faith, of righteousness, of peace and reconciliation, of life and salvation, and of the Gospel; and which Christ gave to his disciples, and gifts along with them to preach them, and abilities to defend them:

Which thou gavest me] For the words and doctrines which Christ, as the great prophet in Israel spoke, were not his own, but his Father's; and these were given him to speak and deliver to others, and in which he was faithful. So Jonathan ben Uzziel (g) paraphrases the text in *Deut. xviii. 18.* concerning that prophet, the Messiah, God would raise up, after this manner; "A prophet will I raise up unto them from among their brethren, in whom the holy Spirit shall be, like unto thee; *וְאֵתִי פָחוּמִי* "and I will give the words" of my prophecy into his mouth, and he shall speak with them all that I have commanded." And so the Messiah Jesus did:

And they have received them] Willingly and gladly, with reverence and meekness, with love and thankfulness; so as to understand them, and believe them, and so as to be affectionately and closely attached to them:

And have known surely that I came out from thee] Which is meant, not of his eternal filiation, but of his constitution and commission, as mediator, by his Father; of which they had certain knowledge, full assurance of faith, and sincerely owned and confessed, being fully persuaded he was the true Messiah, and no impostor:

And they have believed that thou didst send me] Into this world, to seek and to save lost sinners, to redeem all the chosen ones, and to perform every thing necessary to their salvation.

9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

I pray for them] This is to be understood of Christ, not as God; for as such he is the object of prayer; nor need he pray to any other; nor is there any superior to him, under that consideration, to pray unto; but as man and mediator: nor is his praying any argument against his Deity; nor proof of inferiority to his Father with respect to his divine nature; since it is not in that, but in his human nature, that he prayed; though this may be ascribed to his whole person as God-man; hence he had the greatest qualifications and abilities

(g) Targum Jon. in *Deut. xviii. 18.*

ties for this work, and his prayers were always heard: praying, as attributed to Christ, must be restrained to his state of humiliation; prayer is never spoken of Christ but whilst he was here on earth; his intercession in heaven is never expressed by prayer; and the saints when they come thither will have done praying. Christ, whilst on earth, was an excellent pattern of prayer; of private and solitary prayer; of social prayer, for and with his disciples; of frequent and fervent prayer; of submission to the will of God in prayer; and of praying even for enemies: the persons he is here said to pray for are his apostles; which shews their danger and their wants, his care over them, and concern for them, and his love unto them:

[I pray not for the world] The inhabitants of it, the carnal unbelieving part of the world, which lie in sin, and will be condemned; as he died not for them, so he prayed not for them; for whom he is the propitiation, he is an advocate; and for whom he died, he makes intercession; and for no other, in a spiritual saving way:

[But for them which thou hast given me] Out of the world, as distinct from them, to be saved with an everlasting salvation by him; and to be preserved safe to his kingdom and glory; for these he prays, for the conversion of them, the application of pardon to them, their final perseverance and eternal glory:

[For they are thine] Not merely by creation, and as the care of his providence, but by eternal election, and special grace in vocation; which is a reason why Christ prayed for them, and an argument why the Father should, and would regard his prayers.

10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

[And all mine are thine, and thine are mine] Christ is speaking not of things, but of persons; otherwise all the perfections of his nature as God, and all the works he did, and doctrines he taught as man, were of his Father; as all the perfections of his Father, his nature, his names, his works, his worship, were his; the same that belongs to the one belongs to the other: but persons are here meant, and these the elect of God, particularly the apostles, who were his and his Father's; belonged to them both by election, covenant-transactions, redemption, and efficacious grace in conversion; which mutual interest arises from an union in nature, an agreement in covenant, and a conjunction in operation:

[And I am glorified in them] Or by them, they ascribing all divine perfections, works and worship to him; attributing the whole of their salvation to

him, and giving him all the glory of it; believing in him; walking worthy of him, in their lives and conversations; suffering patiently and cheerfully for his sake; and abiding by his Gospel and ordinances; and he will be glorified by them, and in them hereafter, and that to all eternity.

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

[And now I am no more in the world] In the earth; which is no contradiction to his resurrection from the dead, and stay with his disciples for awhile; nor to his return to judge the world at the last day; nor to his reigning on earth with his saints a thousand years; since it will not be the world as it now is, but it will be a new earth, renewed, purified and refined, and clear of the wicked inhabitants of it; and in which will only dwell righteous persons: besides, Christ was to be, and will be no more in the world, in such circumstances, and doing such work as he then was: the meaning is, that whereas he had been in the world, and had done, or as good as done the work he came about, he was now just going out of it; it was but a very little while he had to stay in it; nor should he continue long with his disciples when he rose from the dead; and whereas his bodily presence had been a guard unto them, a protection of them, and he had bore the heat and burden of the day for them, and had took all reproaches and persecutions upon himself, now he was going from them:

[But these are in the world] And will continue for some time, they having much work to do, and he exposed to the evils, snares and temptations of it; where they were hated, and were liable to great hardships, afflictions and persecutions; which shews that Christ was not so intent on his own glory, as to neglect the good of his people, and to be unconcerned for them:

[And I come to thee] Signifying his death; the deposition of his soul into his Father's hands; his ascension in soul and body to him; his entrance into heaven; and session at the right hand of God; and therefore had nothing to ask for on his own account: but his disciples he was parting with lay near his heart, and therefore he prays;

[Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me] The person prayed unto is God the Father, the Father of Christ, and of his people; a very proper relation to consider God in and under in prayer to him; since it must give freedom, boldness and hope of success: the epithet *holy* is exceeding suitable, as it perfectly agrees with

with him who is essentially so; and since it was holiness, and an increase of it, Christ prays for; and that these his disciples might be kept from the evil of sin: the persons prayed for are those that were given to Christ in election, and in the covenant, to be kept by him, and therefore he is the more solicitous for their preservation: his request is, that his Father would keep them from the evil of the world; from sinking under temptations and afflictions; faithful to him and to his Gospel, and in unity among themselves; and that *through* or *in* his own name; *in* it, in the doctrine of the Gospel, and in the worship of God, and profession of him; *through* it, through himself, as a wall of fire about them, and by his power through faith unto salvation:

That they may be one, as we are] In nature, will, affection and understanding; which must be understood not of equality, but of likeness; and designs not their union to Christ, but to one another; abiding together, cleaving to each other, standing fast in one Spirit, having the same designs, and the interest of a Redeemer in view, and at heart.

12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

While I was with them in the world] This does not imply that Christ was not in the world now, for he was; but signifies that he was just going out of it; and that his continuance in it was very short: nor that he was, and would be no longer with his disciples; for this is to be understood of his bodily, not of his spiritual presence; in which respect Christ is with his people whilst they are on earth, and they are with him when he is in heaven:

I kept them in thy name] By his Father's authority and power, in his doctrines:

Those that thou gavest me I have kept] That is, those that were given him to be his apostles; these he kept close to himself, and from the evil of the world, and from temporal and eternal ruin:

But the son of perdition] Judas, a child of Satan, whose name is Apollyon the destroyer, who was now about to betray his Lord and Master; and was one that was appointed to eternal ruin and destruction, of which he was justly deserving; and which is no instance of the apostacy of saints, since though he was given to Christ as an apostle, yet not in eternal election, to be saved by him:

That the scripture might be fulfilled] This respects either Christ's keeping of his people, and their final perseverance, whereby the scriptures that speak of it are fulfilled; or rather the destruction of Judas, whereby such passages as speak of that have their accomplishment, particularly *Psalms* cix. 8. Some have thought that this only refers to the general sense of the scriptures, both the law and prophets; that some are chosen to everlasting life, and others are appointed to wrath; that some are saved, and others lost; some sons of God, and others sons of perdition; but it rather seems to regard some particular passage or passages of scripture relating to Judas, his character, condition and end, and which are very manifestly pointed at in the psalm referred to; see *2 Esdras* ii. 26.

13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

And now come I to thee] As in *John* x. 11. which he repeats as a very great happiness to himself, and with much pleasure and joy, but not without concern for those he was parting from:

And these things I speak in the world] Which he had expressed in this prayer concerning the nature of eternal life, and his power to give it to all the Father had given him; concerning the work of redemption finished by him, and the glory due unto him on that account; concerning his chosen ones, particularly the apostles, and the mutual interest he and his Father had in them; and what he had done for them, in revealing the Gospel to them, keeping them by the powerful influence of his grace, and the great concern he had for their future preservation; and these things he took notice of in his prayer, whilst he was in the world, before he took his leave of them; and adds,

That they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves] Either the joy which Christ had in them, which was of an early date, is still continued towards them, and will be more fully expressed, when they shall all be brought safe home to glory, and be for ever with him; or else the joy of which Christ is the author and object, which comes from him, and centers in him. Saints rejoice in the person of Christ; in the greatness and dignity of his person, as God over all, hence they know that what he did and suffered answered the purpose; that he must have great interest in heaven, and they must be safe in his hands; and in the fitness of it, to be a mediator, he being God and man in one person; and in the fulness of it, which is all theirs, it is with delight they view it, with joy they receive from it, and believe they shall not want; and in the beauty of it, he being

fairer

fairer than the children of men. The offices Christ bears as Prophet, Priest, and King, the relations he stands in as Father, Husband, Brother and Friend; his Gospel and communion with him, the blessings of grace in him, as peace, pardon, righteousness and salvation, lay a foundation for solid joy in them that believe; as do also his death, resurrection, exaltation and intercession. This joy in him is a grace of the Spirit, and is attended with faith in Christ; it should be constant, but is frequently interrupted; though the ground and foundation of it is always the same; it is therefore at present imperfect, but may be increased; it is unknown to the world, and inexpressible by the saints; and may be said to be fulfilled in them, when it abounds in them more and more; when they are full of it, and that is full of glory, and which will be fulfilled in glory.

14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

I have given them thy word] The Gospel, and a commission and abilities to preach it, and which is a reason of what follows, namely, the world's hatred of them; because this word is not of men, nor agreeable to carnal reason; it magnifies the grace of God, and destroys boasting in men; it is against the carnal interest, worldly views and lusts of men:

And the world hath hated them] The inhabitants of the world, worldly men, such as are what they were when they first came into the world; are under the influence of the god of the world, and led by the spirit of it, and are wholly taken up with the things thereof. The unbelieving Jews are chiefly designed, who bore an implacable hatred to Christ and his apostles; and the same fate do the faithful ministers of Christ and his members share, in all ages and places, more or less: the men of the world gnash their teeth at them, secretly plot against them, and inwardly curse them; rejoice at any evil that befalls them; greedily catch at any thing to reproach them; stick not to say all manner of evil of them, and to do all manner of evil to them:

Because they are not of the world] They were of the world by their natural birth, and had their conversation with the men of it, whilst in a state of unregeneracy; but now they were called out of it, and were guided and led by another Spirit; and were separate from the world in their lives and conversations, and which brought the hatred of the world upon them; inasmuch as they had been of them, but now had left them, and professed they did not belong to them; and because their reli-

gious lives put a distinguishing mark on them, and reproved and condemned them:

Even as I am not of the world] Not that Christ and his people are alike in their original; they are of the earth, earthly, he is the Lord from heaven; nor are they so perfect in their walk and conversation in the world, and separation from it, as he; yet there is some likeness between him and them, and some conformity in them to him, which makes the world hate them.

15 ¶ I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world] Either in an unusual manner, by a translation, as Enoch and Elijah were; or by death in its common form, before their time, and purely to be rid of afflictions: this he prayed not for; for he had much work for them to do, by preaching the Gospel, for the conversion of sinners and comfort of saints; and it was for his interest they should live longer; and it would make most for his glory, and be best for his chosen people and churches:

But that thou shouldest keep them from the evil] Either of sin, which is an evil and bitter thing, being committed against a good God, and a righteous law, and brings ruin and destruction upon men; from this the apostles were kept, and all the saints are; not from indwelling sin, nor from the commission of sin, but from the dominion of it, and from falling into it and by it, so as to perish eternally: or from the evil of the world; not from afflictions in it; nor from the reproach and persecution of it; but from its wickedness and lusts, and from the evil men of it: or from Satan the evil one, who is eminently, originally, and immutably so; not from being tempted by him, but from sinking under his temptations, and from being devoured by him. Christ's praying for this, after this manner, shews that evil is very abhorrent, pernicious and powerful; the danger saints are in by it; their incapacity to keep themselves from it; and that the Lord alone is the keeper of his people; but does not suggest that Christ has dropped the charge of them, or is unequal to it; but by so doing he expresses his great love to them, how dear they are to him, and what care he takes of them, and what concern he has for them.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

These words are repeated from v. 14. where they are given as a reason of the world's hatred to them; and here, as shewing that they are exposed

to the evil of it; and in both are used as an argument with his Father, that he would take notice of them, and preserve them.

17 ¶ Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

The Syriac version introduces this petition, with the appellation *Abba*, Father: and the sanctification prayed for regards the apostles, either as ministers of the word, and may intend their separation for their work and office; for which, though they were sanctified or separated from their mother's womb, and by Christ when he sent them forth, yet they were to have a fresh commission and unction after our Lord's resurrection, and upon his ascension to heaven; and also their qualification for it, with the truth of grace and doctrine, with holiness of heart and life, and with a perseverance in the truth, by being kept faithful to it: or it may also regard them as christians and believers, and intend a greater degree of the sanctification of the Spirit, which is imperfect in this life; for though sanctification in Christ is perfect, and so it is in the saints, as to parts, yet not as to degrees; which appears from the imperfection of faith, hope, love, and knowledge, from indwelling sin being in the best of saints, from their necessities, from their disclaiming perfection, and their desires after it. Sanctification is a progressive work, which is carried on gradually; as is clear from the characters of regenerate ones, who are first newborn babes, then young men, and afterwards fathers in Christ; from the similes, by which it is expressed; as seed, which opens and grows up by degrees, and light, which shines more and more unto the perfect day; from exhortations to a concern for the growth of it, and prayers for it: and it is indeed, continually carrying on, as may be concluded from the hand in which it is; and the progress and finishing of this work, as well as the beginning of it, are entirely the Lord's; and the way and means in which this is done, are by or through the truth of the Gospel:

Thy word is truth. It is "peculiarly so," as the Arabic version reads it. The Gospel is here meant, and is so called on account of its original, it comes from the God of truth; and because of the concern which Christ, who is the truth, has in it, he being the author, preacher, and sum and substance of it; and because the Spirit of truth has dictated it, leads into it, qualifies men to preach it, and makes it effectual; and because it contains all truth necessary to salvation, and nothing but truth, and particularly that eminent truth, salvation alone by Christ; and because it is opposed to the law, which is but a shadow, of which the good

things in the Gospel are the substance: now this is the means both of the beginning, and increasing, and carrying on the work of sanctification in the hearts of God's people, as well as of an experimental knowledge of it; and an increase of that knowledge does more and more qualify the ministers of it for their ministerial work and service, which seems here chiefly designed.

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

As thou hast sent me into the world. Which does not suppose inequality of nature, nor change of place, nor any force upon him, nor disrespect unto him, nor a state of separation from his Father; but that he *was* before he *was* sent; that he was a person, a divine distinct person from his Father; and designs the manifestation of him in human nature; and shews, that as mediator, he had a divine warrant and authority, and was no impostor: what he was *sent* into the world to do, was in general the will of God; particularly to preach the Gospel, and chiefly and more especially to work out the salvation of his people:

Even so have I also sent them into the world. To preach the Gospel likewise: he had already sent them forth on this errand, and in a little time they were to receive a new and enlarged commission for this service; which mission of them to such work, implies great honour put upon them, authority in them, and qualifications with them; and hence success attended them: the place into which they were sent is, *the world*; first the Jewish, and then the Gentile world, and every part of it; out of which he would not have them taken; and where they were sure to meet with reproach and persecution; and where God's elect lay, who were to be converted through their ministry; for the work they were sent thither for, was to open blind eyes, turn men from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sin, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified. Now though there is not an equality between the mission of Christ by his Father, and of the apostles by him, yet there is a likeness; there is an agreement in their original, both are divine, and of authority in the place they were sent, the world; and in their work, to declare the mind and will of God: all which carries in it a strong argument with his Father to regard these persons; for inasmuch as they were in a world that hated them, they needed divine power and protection; and being in a wicked world, they needed sanctification and preservation; and having such work to do, they therefore needed divine assistance, and fresh supplies of grace.

19 And

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

And for their sakes I sanctify myself] Which is to be understood, not of his making himself holy; for he never was a sinner, and so stood in no need of sanctification: he was made like unto us, yet without sin; he looked like a sinner, but was not one; he was traduced, charged, and treated as such, but was perfectly holy, and free from all sin; he was essentially and infinitely holy as God; and as man, he was holy in his conception and birth; he was filled with the Holy Ghost, and was holy in his life and in his death: rather this may be meant of his being separated, and set apart for his office as mediator, which, though done by the Father, and is ascribed unto him, *John* xi. 36. yet may also be attributed to himself; since he voluntarily devoted himself to this work, and cheerfully accepted of it: though it seems best to understand it of his offering himself a sacrifice for, and in the room and stead of his people, in allusion to the offerings under the law, the sacrificing of which is expressed by sanctifying, *Exod.* xiii. 2, 14, 15. and because his sacrifice was an holy one: what he sanctified or offered was *himself*; not his divine, but human nature, his body and his soul; and these as in union with his divine person: which gives his sacrifice the preference to all others, and is the true reason of its virtue and efficacy; and this is expressive of his great love. He himself is also the sanctifier or offerer, which shews him to be a priest, and that he had a power over his own life, and that he sacrificed it voluntarily; and this he is said to do at that present time, because the time was very near that he was to be offered up, and his present prayer and intercession were a part of his priestly office. This he did not for his own sake, nor for the sake of angels, nor for all men, but for his disciples, as distinct from the world; and not for the apostles only, but for all that the Father had given to him; and that as their substitute and surety, in their room and stead:

That they also might be sanctified through the truth] That is, have all their sins expiated, and they be cleansed from all the guilt and filth of them, through Christ himself and his sacrifice, who is the truth; or *in truth*; as it may be rendered, really and truly, in opposition to the legal sacrifices which atoned for sin, not really, only typically; or through the Gospel of truth, bringing the good news of atonement by the blood and sacrifice of Christ, and which the Spirit of God seals to the conscience with comfort and joy.

20 ¶ Neither pray I for these alone, but

for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

Neither pray I for these alone] Meaning his immediate apostles and disciples, for whose preservation and sanctification he had been particularly praying in the preceding verses; and now, that it might not be thought that these were his only favourites, and the only persons he had a regard for, and to whom his intercession and sacrifice were confined; he adds,

But for them also which shall believe in me through their word] Christ is the object of true faith; which faith is not a mere assent of the mind to any truth concerning Christ, as that he is the Son of God, the Messiah and Saviour of the world; but it is a spiritual sight of him, of the necessity, fulness and suitableness of him as a Saviour; a going forth unto him, laying hold on him, and depending upon him for life and salvation; of which the preaching of the Gospel is the instrumental means: it is indeed a gift of God, and a fruit of electing grace, and which is secured by it; hence our Lord knew that there would be a number in all successive generations, that would believe in him through the ministry of the word; and for these persons, and their conversion, and the success of the Gospel to the good of their souls, he prays,

21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

That they all may be one] Among themselves. This may regard their unity in faith, and in the knowledge of Christ; for there is but one faith which all truly experienced souls agree in: they are converted by the same Spirit, and have the same work of grace wrought in them; and though they have not the same degree of light, and measure of spiritual knowledge, yet they agree in the main point of the Gospel, salvation alone by the Lord Jesus Christ; and such an agreement in the doctrine of faith, and the grand articles of it, respecting the person and offices of Christ, is absolutely necessary to their comfortable walking together in church-fellowship, and the more honourable carrying on the worship of God together; and which will be more manifest in the latter day, when saints shall see eye to eye: likewise an unity in affection may be here designed, a being knit together in love to each other; which is the bond of perfectness, the evidence of regeneration, the badge of the christian profession, the beauty of church-communion, and the barrier and security from the common enemy; and without which,

social worship and mutual service will be either neglected or coldly performed. Moreover, this petition may have respect to the gathering together all the saints at the last day, as one body united together in faith and love; as one general assembly and church of the first-born; as one fold of which Christ is the head, saviour and shepherd:

As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee.] There is a mutual in-being of the Father and the Son, who are one in nature and essence, in power and will, and in understanding and affection; which union, though it infinitely transcends any kind of union among men, or that can be conceived of by men, yet is the exemplar of the saints union one with another, and to the divine persons; and which must be understood not of an equality, but a likeness:

That they also may be one in us.] There is an union of all the elect to God and Christ, which is already compleat, and not to be prayed for; they are all loved by God with an everlasting love, by which they are inseparably one with him; they are all chosen in Christ, as members in their head, and are federally united to him, as their mediator, surety, and representative; in consequence of which he has assumed their nature, stood in their place and stead, and brought them nigh to God. There is a manifestation of union in conversion, when persons openly appear to be in Christ; and as a fruit and effect of everlasting love, are with loving-kindness drawn unto him; and which will be more gloriously seen, when all the elect shall be brought in, and God shall be all in all; and is what Christ here prays for:

That the world may believe that thou hast sent me.] Either the rest of God's chosen people in the world, not yet called; or rather, the wicked and reprobate part of the world, particularly Jews and Deists: they shall see the concord and agreement of the saints in doctrine, worship, and affection in the latter day; and when all the elect shall be gathered together, and not only their union to each other, but to the divine persons, shall clearly appear; they will then believe, and be obliged to own that Jesus is the true Messiah, was sent of God, and is no impostor.

22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one:

And the glory which thou gavest me.] Not the glory of his Deity; this is the same with his Father, what he has in right of nature, and not by gift; nor can it be communicated to creatures; this would be to make them one in the Godhead, as the three are one, which is not the design of

the expression in the close of the verse: not his mediatorial glory, which he had with the Father before the world began; this indeed was given him by the Father, but is not given to the saints: nor the glory of working miracles; which glory Christ had, and which, as man, he had from the Father, and in which his own glory was manifested; this he gave to his disciples; but all that are his have not had it, and some have had it who are none of his: rather the Gospel is meant, which is glorious in its author, matter and subject, in its doctrines, in the blessings of grace it reveals, and promises it contains, and in the efficacy and usefulness of it to the souls of men. This was given to Christ, and he gave it to his disciples:

I have given them.] As he did the words that were given to him, *v. 8.*

That they may be one, even as we are one.] For the Gospel was given to the apostles, and still is to the ministers of it, to bring men to the unity of the faith, for the perfecting of the saints, and the edifying of the body of Christ: or else the fulness both of grace and glory, which is in Christ's hands for his people, is here designed. This is one considerable branch of the glory of Christ, as mediator, to be full of grace and truth; this was given him by the Father, and is what he communicates to his; even the Spirit, and all sorts of grace, and every supply of it; and which greatly contributes to the union of the saints among themselves: yea, eternal happiness is often signified by *glory*; and this is given to Christ; he has it in his hands to give to others; and he does give it; a view of it, a right unto it, a meetness for it, a pledge of it, some foretastes of it, and a kind of a possession of it; for the saints have it already, at least in him; and he will give them the actual enjoyment of it, and this in order to their consummate and perfect union together, as a glorious church without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

I in them.] Christ is in his saints; not as he is in all the world, being the omnipresent God; or as he is in every man, communicating the light of nature as creator; or as he is in the human nature, which is united to his divine person; or circumscriptively to the exclusion of him elsewhere; for he is in heaven, his blood is within the veil, and his righteousness without us: but he is in them in a gracious manner in regeneration; when he is revealed to them, formed in them, enters into them, takes possession of them, communicates his grace,

grace, grants fellowship with himself, and dwells in them; not only by his spirit and grace, but in person, as the head in the members, as the master of the house, and the king of them; which is an instance of condescending grace, and is peculiar to God's elect: hence all their holiness and fruitfulness; nor shall they ever perish; their bodies shall rise from the dead, and being reunited to their souls, Christ will be in them in a glorious manner to all eternity.

And thou in me] The Father is in Christ, not only by union of nature, nor merely in him, as mediator in a way of grace; but as he will shew himself in and through him in glory for evermore, and is what is here prayed for:

That they may be made perfect in one] This regards not their justification, which is already perfect; nor their sanctification, which will be; but either perfection in glory, when they will be perfect in knowledge, in holiness, in peace, joy and love: or rather the perfection of their numbers is meant, when the whole election of grace will be compleated in regeneration, sanctification, and glorification:

And that the world may know that thou hast sent me] As before, *ſ. 21.* see the note there;

And hast loved them, as thou hast loved me] The oriental versions, the Syriac, Arabic, Persic and Ethiopic, all read the words thus, "and I have loved them, as thou hast loved me;" contrary to all the Greek copies, and other versions, which read as we do. The Father loved Christ as his own Son, and as mediator; so he loved him when he assumed human nature, and became obedient to his will both in doing and suffering; when his Father left him, and poured out his wrath upon him, and when he laid down his life for the sheep. The instances of his love to him as mediator are, his putting all things into his hands, shewing him all that he does, and concealing nothing from him, and appointing him the only Saviour, the head of the church, and judge of the world. The nature of this love is, that it is from eternity; is a love of complacency and delight; it is special and peculiar, unchangeable and inseparable, and will last for ever: now God has loved his people, as he has loved his Son; he loves them not merely as creatures, as the descendents of Adam, or as considered in themselves, but as in Christ. The instances of his love to them are, his choosing them in Christ; making a covenant with them in him; the mission of him into this world, to obtain salvation for them; the quickening and calling of them, by his grace; the care he takes of them afterwards in supplying their wants, supporting them under temptations, delivering them out of afflictions,

and causing all things to work together for their good; to all which add the provisions he makes for them, both for time and eternity. The nature of this love is such as that he bears to Christ; it is from everlasting; a love of the utmost delight and pleasure; it is special and peculiar, unchangeable, and will continue for ever: there is not the same reason for his loving them as his Son; and this *as* must not be thought to denote equality, but similitude and order.

24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me] Not all the world, but a select number; not apostles only, nor as such; nor believers, or as such, for as such they were not given to Christ; nor as considered in effectual vocation; but as the elect of God, and by that eternal act of his grace; when they were given to Christ as his children, as his spouse, as his church, as the sheep of his hand, as his portion, and to be preserved by him; which is known by their calling and conversion: the form in which these words are delivered, is not so much by way of intreaty, as demand; they are a declaration of Christ's will, in which he insists on it as his right, upon the foot of his purchase, and those covenant-transactions which passed between him and his Father, on the behalf of those that were given to him: that they

Be where I am] Not where he was then, unless it may be meant of him as the omnipresent God, and as such then in heaven; though he rather designs where he should be as man, after his resurrection, and where the souls of saints are after death; and where they will be, soul and body, when raised again; and which is desirable both to Christ, and to his people; this was the joy that was set before him, and what they comfort one another with, that they shall be for ever with him:

That they may behold my glory which thou hast given me] Not the simple abstract glory of his Deity; which, as it was not given to him, is not to be seen by them; but his glory as Mediator: this was seen, though imperfectly by some, in the days of his flesh; and in the glass of the Gospel a believer now has some views of it, and by faith sees, knows, and is assured that Christ is glorified in heaven; but hereafter the saints in their own persons, and with their own eyes, shall see him as he is, and appear in glory with him; which sight of his glory will be near, and not at a distance, appropriating

propriating and assimilating, rejoicing, satisfying, and for ever:

For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world] This is mentioned both as a reason why such a glory was given him, because of his Father's early love to him as mediator; and as an argument why he might expect to be heard and answered, because of the interest he had in his affections, which had been strongly towards him, even from everlasting; and because the persons he asks, or rather demands these things for, shared in the same ancient love.

25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

O righteous Father] God is righteous in all the divine persons; the Father is righteous, the Son is righteous, and the holy Spirit is righteous: he is so in his nature; righteousness is a perfection of it; he is so in all his purposes and promises; in all his ways and works of providence and grace; in predestination, redemption, justification, pardon of sin, and eternal glory. Christ makes use of this epithet, as containing a reason why he might justly expect that all his petitions and claims, on behalf of himself and people, would be regarded:

The world hath not known thee] The unbelieving Jews, and idolatrous Gentiles, wicked men, one or another, know not God; as not the Father, so neither the Son, nor Spirit; though Deity may be known by them, or that there is a God, yet they know not God in Christ, nor as the Father of Christ, or as their Father in him, nor what it is to have communion with him; nor do they know any of the things of God in a spiritual way; which shews the darkness and blindness of men by nature, the necessity of a divine illumination, and the miserable state of men without one:

But I have known thee] His nature, perfections and glory, his secret thoughts, purposes and designs, his covenant, promises and blessings, his love, grace and good-will to his people, his whole mind and will; as he needs must, since he was one with him, and lay in his bosom.

And these have known that thou hast sent me] Meaning his disciples and apostles, whom he distinguishes from the world; these knew the Father that sent him, and that he was sent by the Father; they knew the love of the Father in sending of him, the manner in which he was sent, and the end, man's redemption, for which he was sent; and acknowledged all this, and which laid them under an obligation to trust in him, love him, and magnify his grace; and is used by Christ as an

argument with the Father to be concerned for them.

26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

And I have declared unto them thy name] Himself, his nature, his perfections, especially of grace and mercy, his mind and will, his Gospel; see the note on *1. 6.* A very fit person Christ was to make this declaration, since he was with him from all eternity, and was in his bosom; the Father did all in him, and his name is in him; and he is the faithful witness; nor is any thing of God to be known sayingly but in and through Christ: the apostles are here particularly meant, though the same is true with respect to all that are given to Christ, who are his children and brethren, to whom he also declares the name of God:

And will declare it] More fully to them after his resurrection, during his forty days stay with them, and upon his ascension, when he poured down his Spirit in such a plentiful and extraordinary manner upon them; and will declare it to others besides them in the Gentile world; and still more in the latter-day glory, and to all believers more and more:

That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them] That is, that a sense of that love with which God loves his Son, as mediator, might be in them, and abide in them; and which is the rather mentioned, because they are loved by the Father with the same love, and share all the blessed consequences of it, the knowledge and sense of which they come at, through Christ's declaring his Father's name unto them; and which they will have a greater sense of, and will be swallowed up in it in heaven to all eternity:

And I in them] Dwelling in them, taking up his residence in them; not only by his Spirit and grace here, but by his glorious presence with them hereafter; when they shall be brought to his Father's house, behold his glory, and be for ever with him.

C H A P. XVIII.

In this chapter we hear of Christ's going into a garden with his disciples, 1. where Judas cometh to betray him, 2, 3. the band of soldiers, at Christ's speech, fall down on the earth, 4—9. Peter smiteth off Malchus's ear, wherefore Christ rebuketh him, 10, 11. Christ is brought before Annas, then before Caiaphas, 12—14. two disciples follow Christ. Peter denieth him, 15—18. Caiaphas examineth Christ concerning his doctrine, 19—21. One of the officers smiteth Christ, whom

whom he reproveth for it, *ſ. 22—24. Peter denieth him twice more, ſ. 25—27. Chriſt is brought before Pilate, who inquireth after his accuſation, and declareth him innocent, and would have releaſed him, ſ. 28—39. but the Jews require Barabbas of him, ſ. 40.*

WHEN Jeſus had ſpoken theſe words, he went forth with his diſciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his diſciples.

When Jeſus had ſpoken theſe words] Referring either to his diſcourſes in chapters xiv, xv, xvi. in which he acquaints his diſciples with his approaching death; comforts them under the ſorrowful apprehenſion of his departure from them; gives them many excellent promiſes for their relief, and very wholeſome advice how to conduct themſelves; lets them know what ſhould befall them, and that things, however diſtreſſing for the preſent, would have a joyful iſſue: or elſe to his prayer in the preceding chapter, in which he had been very importunate with his Father, both for himſelf and his diſciples; or to both of theſe, which is highly probable:

He went forth with his diſciples over the brook Cedron] The ſame with Kidron in *2 Sam. xv. 23.* and elſewhere: it had its name, not from cedars, for not cedars but olives chiefly grew upon the mount, which was near it; and beſides the name is not Greek, but Hebrew, from קדר which ſignifies *black*, though the Arabic verſion renders it, *the brook ארן ארן of Cedar*: it had its name either from the darkneſs of the valley in which it ran, being between high mountains, and having gardens in it, and ſet with trees; or from the blackneſs of the water through the ſoil that ran into it, being a kind of a common-ſewer, into which the Jews caſt every thing that was unclean and defiling; ſee *2 Chron. xxix. 16.* and chapter xxx. 14. Particularly there was a canal which led from the altar in the temple to it, by which the blood and ſoil of the ſacrifices were carried into it (*a*). This brook was but about three feet over from bank to bank, and in the ſummer time was quite dry, and might be walked over dry-ſhod; and is therefore by Joſephus ſometimes called the brook of Kedron (*b*), and ſometimes the valley of Kedron (*c*): in this valley were corn-fields: for hither the ſanhedrim ſent their meſſengers to reap the ſheaf of the firſt-fruits, which always was to be brought from

a place near to Jeruſalem (*d*); and it is very likely that willows grew by the brook, from whence they might fetch their willow branches at the feaſt of tabernacles; for the Jews ſay (*e*), there is a place below Jeruſalem called *Motza*, (in the Gemara it is ſaid to be *Klamia* or *Colonia*), whither they went down and gathered willow branches; it ſeems to be the valley of *Kedron*, which lay on the eaſt of Jeruſalem, between that and the mount of Olives (*f*); it had fields and gardens adjoining to it; ſee *2 Kings xxiii. 4.* So we read of a garden here, into which Chriſt immediately went, when he paſſed over this brook. The blood, the filth and ſoil of it, which ſo diſcoloured the water, as to give it the name of the *black-brook*, uſed to be ſold to the gardeners to dung their gardens with (*g*). It was an emblem of this world, and the darkneſs and filthineſs of it, and of the exerciſes and troubles of the people of God in it, which lie in the way to the heavenly paradise and mount of Zion, through which Chriſt himſelf went, drinking of *the brook in the way*; and through which alſo all his diſciples and followers enter into the kingdom of heaven: it may alſo be a figure of the dark valley of the ſhadow of death, through which Chriſt and all his members paſs to the heavenly glory. And I ſee not why this black and unclean brook, may not be a representation of the pollutions and defilements of ſin; which being laid on Chriſt when he paſſed over it, made him ſo heavy and ſore amazed in the human nature, as to deſire the cup might paſs from him. Once more, let it be obſerved, that it was the brook David paſſed over when he fled from his ſon Abſalom; in this David was a type of Chriſt, as in other things: Abſalom repreſented the people of the Jews, who reſected the Meſſiah, and rebelled againſt him; Achitopel, Judas, who betrayed him; and the people that went with David over it, the diſciples of our Lord: only there was this difference; there was a father fleeing from a ſon, here a Son going to meet his Father's wrath; David and his people wept when they went over this brook, but ſo did not Chriſt and his diſciples; the ſorrowful ſcene to them both began afterwards in the garden. This *black brook* and *dark valley*, and it being very late at night when it was paſſed over, all added to that dark diſpenſation, that hour of darkneſs, which now came upon our Lord; yet he went forth over it of his own accord, willingly and chearfully, not being forced or compelled by any; and his diſciples with him, not to be partners of his ſufferings, but to be witneſſes of them, and to receive

(a) Miſn. Middot, c. 3. ſ. 2. Meila, c. 3. ſ. 3. & Bartenora in ib. Maimon. & Bartenora in Miſn. Zebachim, c. 8. ſ. 7. & Temura, c. 7. ſ. 6. (b) Antiq. l. 8. c. 3. ſ. 5. (c) Ibid. l. 9. c. 7. ſ. 3. & de Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 4. ſ. 2. & ſ. 6. ſ. 1.

(d) Miſna Menachot, c. 10. ſ. 2. 3.

(e) Miſna Succa,

c. 4. ſ. 5.

(f) Jerom de locis Hebraicis, fol. 92. C.

(g) Miſn. Yoma, c. 5. ſ. 6. Maimon. Meila, c. 2. ſ. 11.

ceive some knowledge and instruction from what they should see and hear :

Where was a garden into which he entered, and his disciples] There were no orchards nor gardens within the city of Jerusalem, but rose-gardens, which were from the times of the prophets (b); all others were without; and this was a very proper place for gardens, where so much dung was near at hand. Whether this garden belonged to one of Christ's friends, is not certain; but since he often resorted hither, no doubt it was with the leave, and by the consent of the proprietor of it. However so it was, that as the first Adam's disobedience was committed in a garden, the second Adam's obedience to death for sin began here; and as the sentence of death, on account of sin, was passed in a garden, it began to be executed in one.

2 And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oft-times resorted thither with his disciples.

And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place] This character is given of Judas, to distinguish him from another disciple of the same name; and though as yet he had not betrayed him, yet it was determined he should, and Christ knew it, and he was now about to do it: and it is observed, that Judas was as well acquainted with the place of Christ's resort, and knew the garden he frequently retired to, as the rest of the disciples; to shew that Christ did not go there to hide and secure himself from him, but to meet him, and that he might have an opportunity of finding him with the greater ease :

For Jesus oft-times resorted thither with his disciples] When at Jerusalem at any of the feasts, and at this festival; partly for refreshment and rest after he had been preaching in the temple, and partly for prayer, and also for private conversation with his disciples.

3 Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.

Judas then, having received a band of men] From the captain of this band, who in *Y. 12.* is called a *Chiliarch*, that is, a commander of a thousand men, one might conclude there were so many in this band; but it seems, that such an officer might have two bands under his command; and if this was the case, there were at least five hundred men

in this company; a large number indeed, to take an unarmed person; and yet, as if this was not sufficient, it is added,

And officers from the chief priests and Pharisees] Servants that belonged to each of these, and who seem to be a considerable number also; for these are said to be

A great multitude] *Matt. xxvi. 47.* Nay, not only so, but the chief priests, captains of the temple, and elders of the people, were themselves among them, *Luke xxii. 52.* to see that the men did their work, and did not return without him; as these officers, when sent by them once before, did :

Cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons] מנא which is no other than the Greek word here used for a lantern, the Jews tell us (i), was an earthen vessel, in which a candle was put and covered, that the wind might not put it out, and it had holes in the sides of it, through which light was let out; their למד "or lamp," here rendered torch, they say (k), was also an earthen vessel in the form of a reed, at the top of which was a proper receptacle, in which they burnt old rags dipped in oil: now though it was full moon, being the time of the passover, they brought these along with them to discover him by the light of, and find him out with them, if he should hide himself among the trees, or in any of the more shady places in the garden; and they took warlike instruments, as swords, spears, and staves, as if they had a thief or a murderer to apprehend, or a little army of men to encounter with; whereas there were only Christ, and his eleven disciples; and these in no condition, nor had any design, to defend themselves in an hostile manner.

4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

Jesus therefore, knowing all things] As being the omniscient God, so his knowledge reaches to all persons and things, without any limitation and restriction; though here it has a regard to the all things

That should come upon him] Even all the sufferings he should endure, which were all determined by God; agreed to by him, in the covenant of grace; predicted in the Old Testament, and foretold by himself: he knew all the circumstances that would attend his sufferings, as that he should be betrayed by Judas; be forsaken by the rest of his disciples; that the Jews would give him gall

and

(b) T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 8a. 2. Abot. R. Nathan, c. 35. Maimon. Beth Habbechira, c. 7. §. 14. Moses Kotlensis Mitsvot Toda p. 164.

(i) Maimon. & Bartenora in Mish. Celim, c. 2. §. 4.

(k) Ibid. in §. 3.

and vinegar in his thirst; and the soldiers part his garments among them: he knew the time of his sufferings; and that it was now at hand; and that Judas and his company were not far off: and therefore,

Went forth] Out of the garden, or at least from that part of it where he was, and his disciples with him: this was done to shew his willingness to suffer; he went forth of his own accord; he did not hide himself in the garden, as the first Adam did; he did not stay till those that sought his life came up to him: he went forth, not to make his escape from them, but to meet them, and make himself known unto them;

And said unto them, Whom seek ye?] This question was put, not out of ignorance; for he knew full well who they were seeking after; nor with a design to deceive them, and make his escape; but to shew that he was not afraid of them, and that they could not have known him, nor have taken him, had he not made himself known, and offered himself to them; and which makes it appear, that he was willingly apprehended by them, and voluntarily suffered.

5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.

They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth] Their answer is not, *thee*; for they knew him not, their eyes were holden, or struck with dimness, or blindness, as the men of Sodom were; or they that answered might be such who never personally knew him: nor do they say *Christ*, for they rejected and denied him as the Messiah; nor do they call him that deceiver, or seditious person, as they sometimes did, being willing to cover their malicious views and intentions; but *Jesus of Nazareth*, a name by which he was commonly known, being taken from his education and conversation in that place; though this was sometimes given him in a contemptuous way:

Jesus saith unto them, I am he] Or I AM, respecting his name Jehovah, averring himself to be the Christ, and owning himself under the name they were pleased to call him by; which shews how willing he was to be taken by them, and may teach us not to be ashamed of him, or of any nickname we may bear for his sake:

And Judas also which betrayed him stood with them] This circumstance is recorded; to shew that Judas at first did not know him any more than the rest; so that he might easily have passed them if he had pleased; and that Judas did not stand with them as an idle spectator; he came with them to betray him, and was looking out for him; though when

he spake he knew him not: it also expresses the different company Judas was in; a little while ago, he was at supper with Christ, and the other disciples, and now he is at the head of a band of soldiers, and others, to betray him: and also his continuance in his iniquity, and wicked resolutions and agreement; as yet he had no remorse of conscience, or sense of his sin: and it seems to be mentioned also with this view, to inform us, that he fell to the ground with the rest; which is related in the next verse. The Jew (A) asserts, that there is a disagreement between the Evangelist John and the rest of the Evangelists in this account: he observes, that when Judas came with his armed men to take Jesus, Jesus went out to meet them, and asked them, saying, *Whom seek ye?* They say, *Jesus of Nazareth*; to whom he replies, "I AM he;" and then Judas, that betrayed him, stood with them: but Matthew, in his Gospel, chap. xxvi. 47. and Mark, chap. xiv. 43. and Luke, chap. xxii. 47. relate, that Judas gave a sign to the soldiers, when they came to take Jesus, saying, *Him whom I shall kiss, lay hold on*; and they did so. But here is no contradiction, John does not deny that Judas gave a sign to the soldiers; though he omits it, it being so particularly observed by the other Evangelists; and only relates what is not taken notice of by them, and which no ways contradicts what they have asserted: the force of the objection seems to lie here; that, according to the other Evangelists, Judas, as soon as he came into the garden, made up to Christ, and gave the signal by which he might be known, whereas he is here said to stand with the soldiers and officers; and that seeing such a signal was given, Jesus must be, and was known by it, whereas he is here represented as if he was not known by them, until he had made himself known to them; and that as soon as Judas had given the sign, they immediately seized him; whereas, according to this account, they did not, until some words had passed between Christ and them, and they first fell to the ground. In answer to which, it may be said, that admitting that Judas did make up to Christ as soon as he entered the garden, and gave the signal to the soldiers, he might upon that immediately retire, and place himself among the multitude; either to give further directions and instructions to them, or that they might defend him from Jesus, should there be any occasion for it: and though it should be allowed that the signal was given by Judas before this, it might not be discerned by the soldiers, either not being near enough to observe it; or, as some think, being stricken with blindness, for a time, as the Sodomites were; or even supposing it

was

(A) R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 56. p. 445, 446.

was seen, and they knew by it which was Jesus, it is still a fuller proof of the courage and intrepidity of Christ to go forth, and present himself to them, and put the questions he did, and confirm unto them the truth of it, that he was Jesus whom they sought: to which may be added, that it does not appear that Christ was immediately seized by the soldiers, upon the signal given them by Judas, without some intervening words and actions; for though the signal, and the seizure lie very near together in the accounts of Matthew and Mark; yet Luke relates many things between them, as the question of the disciples, whether they should smite with the sword; Peter's cutting off the ear of the high priest's servant; Christ's rebuking him, and touching the servant's ear, and healing it; and some discourse which passed between him, and the chief priests, captains, and elders. All which agree with the account the Evangelist John here gives.

6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.

As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he Immediately upon his speaking these words, which were delivered with so much majesty and authority, and were attended with such a divine power:

They went backward, and fell to the ground They were confounded, surprised, and intimidated, and seemed as if they would have chose rather to have fled from him, than to have apprehended him; and as they retired and went backward, they fainted away, as it were, either at the majesty of his looks, or at the power of his words, or both; so that they became like dead men, falling to the ground. Sometimes the majesty of a man's person, or his fame for some remarkable things done by him, or the innocence and uprightness of his cause, have had such an influence upon his enemies, that they have not been able to execute upon him what they intended. It is reported of Caius Marius, that being reduced to the utmost misery, and shut up in a private house at Minturnæ, (a town in Italy) an executioner was sent to kill him; and though he was an old man, and unarmed, and in the most miserable condition, yet the executioner having drawn his sword, could not attempt to use it; but, as the historian (1) says, being struck with blindness at the glory of the man, ran away astonished and trembling. Now, besides the above things, in their highest perfection, there was in our Lord something more than human; he was God as well as man, and he displayed his divine majesty, glory, and power. This was done, not

to make his escape from them; but to give proof of his Deity, and a specimen of his power at the great day; and to let them know, that if he had not thought fit to have surrendered himself voluntarily to them, though he was an unarmed person, they with all their men and arms, could never have laid hold on him: and to shew them, that he could as easily have struck them dead, as to cause them to fall to the ground: and sometimes striking a person dead immediately, is expressed by this phrase of striking to the ground; and is ascribed to God, who does it by the ministry of angels. Says R. Simeon ben Shetach (m), to some persons at variance, "Let the master of thoughts come, (that is, the blessed God) and take vengeance on you. Immediately Gabriel came and smote them to the ground; and they died immediately." The like is elsewhere said (n), "If thou transgressedst thy Father's command, immediately comes Gabriel, and smites to the ground."

7 Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? This supposes them to be risen up again, and on their feet; no hurt being done to them; for Christ always did good, and not hurt to the bodies of men; he never disabled any, nor took away life, or limb: he only did this to shew his power, and not to do them any real damage; and the same divine person that struck them down, suffered them to rise, and gave them power and strength to get up; which shewed his great clemency and goodness: but they, on the contrary, persisted in their wicked intentions, and were still seeking after him; a plain proof of that judicial hardness of heart, under which they were; and that even miracles wrought will not bring hardened sinners to repentance without powerful and efficacious grace. When Christ, as fearless of them, and to shew that by this action he had no design to make his escape from them, though he could easily have done it, and that he was willing to be apprehended by them, puts the question a second time, and asks them who they were seeking for. Something like this Josephus (o) reports concerning Elisha the prophet, though not repeated as here, nor attended with the like effect: he relates, that Elisha having requested of God that he would smite his enemies with blindness, and that being granted, he went into the midst of them, and asked them, *מי אתם?* "whom do ye come to seek?" They say, "Elisha the prophet;" he promised them to de-

(1) Valerius Maxim. l. 2. c. 5.

(m) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 19. 2. (n) Shemot Rabba, §. 1, fol. 91. 2. (o) Antiq. l. 9. c. 4. §. 3.

liver him to them, if they would follow him into the city, where he was; and so they, being blinded by God, both in their sight and in their mind, followed the prophet.

They said, Jesus of Nazareth] Having recovered their spirits, and being hardened in desperate malice and wickedness, impudently make this reply to him; nor would they, notwithstanding this instance of his power, own him to be the Messiah; but still contemptuously stile him *Jesus of Nazareth*.

8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:

Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he] This he said, upbraiding them with their stupidity; signifying he was ready to deliver himself up into their hands; and which he did with intrepidity and calmness, only on this condition, with this proviso for his disciples;

If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way] Christ was about to suffer for them, and therefore it was not just that they should suffer too; nor was it proper that they should suffer with him, lest their sufferings should be thought to be a part of the price of redemption. Besides, their suffering-time was not come, and they had other work to do: this shews the love of Christ to his disciples, and his care of them, and also his power, and that he could have saved himself as well as them. Moreover, these words may be considered as an emblem and pledge of the acquittance and discharge of God's elect, through the suretyship-engagements, and performances of Christ, who drew near to God on their account, substituted himself in their room, and undertook for them in the counsel and covenant of peace, and laid himself under obligation to pay their debts, to satisfy for their sins, to bring in an everlasting righteousness, to keep and preserve them in this world, and to make them happy in another. Accordingly, in the fulness of time he was made under the law, and stood in their place and stead, and was taken, suffered, died, and rose again. Now, as there was a discharge and acquittance of them from eternity, a non-imputation of sin to them, and a secret letting of them go upon the suretyship-engagements of Christ, and in virtue thereof a passing by, and over, the sins of the Old-Testament-saints; so there was an open acquittance and discharge of them all upon the apprehension, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ; complete deliverance from wrath and condemnation being obtained, and a full title to eternal glory made. Moreover, these words may be considered not only and merely as spoken to the

Jews, but as addressed to the law and justice of God; or however, as having some respect to them, while directed to the others; for justice finding the sins of all the elect upon Christ, on whom the Father had laid them, and Christ had took them upon himself, was seeking for, and about to demand satisfaction of him for them; and he being under the law, and coming into the world to fulfil it, in the room and stead of his people, was about to bear the curse of it; wherefore seeing this was the case, he insists upon it, that they who were convicted of the law as transgressors, and held under it as condemned criminals and malefactors, and who were liable, as considered in themselves, to be seized upon by the justice of God, and to have the sentence of condemnation and death executed upon them, might be discharged and let go; and accordingly, upon the satisfaction made by Christ, this is the case: Christ's people are no longer under the law, as a ministration of condemnation and death, nor liable to suffer the vindictive wrath of God; they are become free from the curses of a righteous law, and are let go by divine justice, and will never suffer the strokes of it, neither in this world nor in that to come; there is no demand to be made upon them, either by the law or justice of God; there is no wrath or punishment will be inflicted on them, either here or hereafter; and they may, and shall go their way into everlasting life, when time shall be no more with them, neither law nor justice having any thing to say to the contrary.

9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.

See *John xvii. 12.* Which saying, though it has a peculiar respect to the apostles, is true of all the elect of God; who are given to Christ, and shall none of them be lost, neither their souls nor bodies; for Christ's charge of them reaches to both; both were given to him, both are redeemed by him, and both shall be saved in him with an everlasting salvation: he saves their souls from an eternal death, and will raise their bodies from a corporal one; wherefore that his care of his disciples, with respect to their bodies as well as souls, with respect to their temporal lives as well as eternal happiness, might be seen, he made this agreement with the Jews that came to take him, or rather laid this injunction on them, to dismiss them; and which, it is very remarkable they did; they laid hands on none of them, even though Peter drew his sword and struck off the ear of one of them: and which is a very considerable instance of the power which Christ had over the spirits of these men, to restrain them; and so a proof of his

proper Deity, as well as of the care of Christ for the preservation of his apostles, whilst he was here on earth; for to that time only the words cited have a respect; in which Christ speaks of his keeping them whilst he was with them, and uses this as an argument with his Father to keep them, now he was removing from them: wherefore their losing their lives afterwards for his sake, as they all did excepting the apostle John, is no contradiction to this expression of his; and besides, they were preserved by the power of God so long, until they had done the work which was appointed them to do, and for which they were given him, and chosen by him to be his apostles, and for which they were better furnished after his resurrection and ascension; for had they been apprehended by the Jews at this time, in all probability, according to an human view of things, such was their weakness, they would have fallen most foully and shamefully, as the instance of Peter, the strongest of them, shews; and therefore to prevent such a temptation, and to preserve them, our Lord took this method to deliver them out of the hands of the Jews: the saving clause, *but the son of perdition*, is here left out, because Judas, who is designed by that character, was now openly declared to be what he was; he was no longer among the disciples; he was separated from them, and had betrayed his master, and was not of the number of those Christ insisted upon might be let go.

10 ¶ Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

Then Simon Peter having a sword] Girt about him, which he either wore in common; or particularly at the feast, as the Galileans are said to do, to preserve them from thieves and wild beasts by the way; or was one of the two the disciples had with them in the garden; or what Peter purposely furnished himself with to defend his master, taking a hint from what was said by him, *Luke xxii. 36.*

Drew it] Before Christ could give an answer to the question put by his disciples, whether they should smite or no, *Luke xxii. 49.* being encouraged thereunto either by what Christ said, *Luke xxii. 38.* or by what he had just done in striking the men to the ground; and being provoked by that servant's going to lay hold on Christ, and who it is probable was more forward and busy than any of the rest; for it appears from the other Evangelists, that Peter did this, though he is not mentioned by name by any of the rest, just as they were seizing and apprehending Christ:

And smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear] He doubtless struck at his head, and intended to have cleaved him down, but missed his aim, and took off his ear: the person is particularly described that he was a servant, and the servant of the high priest, and he is mentioned also by name;

And the servant's name was Malchus] That if the truth of this relation was called in question, it might easily be looked into and examined, when it would appear that it was perfectly right. All the Evangelists give an account of this action of Peter's, but none of them mention his name but this Evangelist; perhaps the reason might be, that Peter was alive when the other Evangelists wrote, and therefore it was not safe to say who it was that did it, lest he, who was the minister of the circumcision, and dwelt among the Jews, should be prosecuted for it, or their minds should be prejudiced against him on that account; but John writing his Gospel many years after his death, the reason for the concealment of his name no longer subsisted: nor indeed is the name of the high priest's servant mentioned by any other of the Evangelists: John had, or however he writes a more exact and particular account of this matter. This was a name frequent with the Syrians, Phenicians, and Hebrews. Jerom (o) wrote the life of one Malchus, a monk or eremite, who was by nation a Syrian; and Porphyry, that great enemy of Christianity, who was by birth a Tyrian, his original name was Malchus, as was his Father's; and which in the Syrian, and his country dialect, as he himself (p) and others (q) say, signifies a king. Josephus (r) speaks of one Cleodemus, whose name was Malchus, that wrote a history of the Hebrews. And some Jewish Rabbins were of this name; hence we read of מלך ר' R. Maluc (s) and of מלכו ר' R. Maleio (t); the name is the same with Malluch, *Neb. x. 4.*

11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

Then said Jesus unto Peter] By way of rebuke, and to prevent his repeating the blow, and that further mischief might not ensue; for such a bold imprudent action risked the lives of all the disciples, who in all probability, would have fallen a sacrifice to the fury and resentment of these men, had

(o) Tom. I. fol. 87.

(p) Porphy. vita in Pletin, c. 17.

(q) Eonapius in vita Porphy. p. 16.

(r) Antiq. l. i. c. 15.

(s) T. Hierof. Succa, fol. 53. 3. & Bava Bathra, fol. 16. 2.

(t) T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 50. 2.

had not Christ interposed in this prudent manner; who also, Luke says, touched the servant's ear and healed him, which no doubt tended greatly to conciliate their minds, and make them easy:

Put up thy sword into the sheath] Peter was not a proper person to bear the sword, and use it; it was a very daring attack, and a dangerous one, and was very unnecessary; since Christ could have defended himself, had he thought fit, without Peter's drawing his sword; and besides, for a word speaking he could have had of his Father more than twelve legions of angels; and it was also contrary to the nature of his kingdom, which was not of this world, nor to be supported and defended in any such manner; and was moreover, as much as in Peter lay, an hinderance of his sufferings, and of the execution of his Father's will and decree; wherefore he adds,

The cup which my Father hath given me] By the cup is meant, the wrath of God, and punishment due to sin, endured by Christ in his sufferings: and is said to be *given* him by his Father; because he called him to these sufferings, they were appointed and determined by him; yea, he was even ordered, and commanded by his Father to drink this cup; justice mixed it up, and put it into his hands; and he took it as coming from his Father, who delighted in seeing him drink it up, as the surety of his people; and a dreadful one it was, a cup of trembling and astonishment, of curse, and not of blessing, of wrath and fury. The allusion seems to be to the master of the family, who appointed, and gave to every one their cup:

Shall I not drink it?] Which expresses his willingness to do it, his eager desire after it, his delight in it, and displeasure at Peter's attempt to hinder him; he being now perfectly reconciled in his human nature to drink it, though it was so bitter a potion: he found it was impossible, considering the decree of God, his own agreement, and the salvation of his people, that it should be otherwise; and besides, it was his Father's will and pleasure, he considered it as coming from him; and therefore cheerfully accepted it, and was resolved to drink it up, and that nothing should hinder him. The Persic version reads it, "I will not give it to another to drink." Peter by this rash action, seeming as if he would have the cup out of Christ's hands, and have drank it himself; which as it could not be, nor would Christ suffer it, so if he had, it would have been of no advantage to the salvation of his people.

12 ¶ Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him.

Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews] Which Judas received, and which came along with him, *v. 3.* When Jesus had rebuked Peter, and healed the servant's ear, and shewed such a willingness to surrender himself to them; they

Took Jesus and bound him] This they did, partly for safety and security, he having several times escaped from them; and partly for contempt, and by way of reproach, using him as they would do the vilest of malefactors: and this was submitted to by Christ, that his people might be loosed from the cords of sin, be delivered from the captivity of Satan, and be freed from the bondage of the law: hereby the types of him were fulfilled, as the binding of Isaac, when his Father was going to offer him up, and the binding of the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar. Who that has read the ceremonies of the sheaf of the first-fruits, but must call them to mind, upon reading this account of the apprehension and binding of Christ, and leading him to the high priest. This sheaf was fetched from places the nearest to Jerusalem, particularly from the fields of Kidron: the manner was this (*u*); "The messengers of the fanhedrim went out (from Jerusalem) on the evening of the feast day (the sixteenth of Nisan, and over the brook Kidron to the adjacent fields), and bound the standing corn in bundles, that it might be the easier reaped, and all the neighbouring cities gathered together there, that it might be reaped in great pomp; and when it was dark, one (of the reapers) says to them, Is the sun set? They say, Yes;—Shall I reap? They say to him, Reap: Shall I reap? They say to him, Reap; three times upon every thing. Then they reap it, and put it into the baskets, and bring it to the court, where they dry it at the fire." Whoever reads this, will easily observe a likeness: the messengers of the great fanhedrim go to the fields of Kidron in the evening, with their sickles and baskets; bind the standing corn; questions and answers pass between them and the people before they reap; and when they have done, they bring the sheaf in their basket to the court, to be dried at the fire. So the officers of the high priest, with others, pass over the brook Kidron, with lanterns, torches, and weapons; in the night go into a garden; there apprehend Jesus; questions and answers pass between them there; then they lay hold on him, bind him, and bring him to the high priest.

13 And led him away to Annas first; for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.

And

(u) Mifn. Menachot, c. 10. §. 2—4.

And led him away to Annas first] Who is elsewhere mentioned with Caiaphas as an high priest also, *Luke* iii. 2. *Acts* iv. 6. or was the *sagan* of the high priest; he and Caiaphas seem to have had the high priesthood alternately; and either now, because his house lay first in the way, or rather, because he was a man of age, learning, and experience, as these men usually were, that they might supply the deficiencies of the high priests, who were sometimes very weak and unlearned men (x); therefore they first lead Christ to him, to have his advice how to proceed, and to take him along with them to his son-in-law, where the great council was convened, and that he might use his interest and authority, in taking proper measures in order to put Jesus to death; and especially they led him to him, for the reason here assigned;

For he was father-in-law to Caiaphas] So that he was, it is very probable, the older man; and being related to him, had an interest in him; and to whom such a sight was equally pleasing as to the high priest himself, or any of the council:

Which was the high priest that same year] For the high priesthood was not for life, but was often changed, being bought and sold for money; see the note on *Luke* iii. 2. so that this clause is very properly added; though Caiaphas held it longer, or, at least, had it more years than one; for Caiaphas was high priest when John began to preach, *Luke* iii. 2. but he now succeeded Simeon ben Camhith, who was priest the year before; as was Eleazar the son of Ananus, the year before that; and before him Ishmael ben Phabi, who were all three successively put into the priesthood by Valerius Gratus, the Roman governor; as was also Caiaphas this year, and whose name was Joseph.

14 Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

Now Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews] The chief priests and Pharisees, who met in council about Jesus, *John* xi. 47, &c. the counsel he gave was,

That it was expedient that one man should die for the people] And which advice was given out of ill-will and malice to Christ, and to prevent, as he thought, the people of the Jews being destroyed by the Romans; though the words have a very good sense, which he did not understand. The people Christ was to die for, was not all the people of the world, nor only the people of the Jews, nor all of them; but all the elect of God, whom God has chosen for his special and peculiar people, and has given to Christ as such: these Christ were

to die for, and did; not merely as a martyr, to confirm his doctrine to them, or as an example to teach them meekness, patience, and courage, but in the room and stead of them, as a surety for them: and it was expedient that he should, in such sense, die for them, because of his suretyship-engagements, that he might make satisfaction to the law and justice of God, and procure the salvation of his people, and send forth the Spirit, to make application of it to them.

15 ¶ And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.

And Simon Peter followed Jesus] It is certain he first fled with the rest, and forsook him, as they all did, notwithstanding his resolution to abide by him; however, he was very desirous to know what would become of Jesus, and what would be the issue of things; with this view he followed him, and not to deny him; though that was the consequence. Other Evangelists say he followed him *afar off*, at a distance; which shewed some fear; and yet to follow him at all discovered love and zeal. To follow Christ is a property of his sheep, and is highly commendable, especially to follow him in sufferings; a greater character a person cannot well have, than to be a follower of Jesus, in the exercise of grace, in the discharge of duty, and in bearing the cross. And yet it does not appear that Peter did well in following Christ now; for Christ had cautioned him of his overconfidence, had hinted to him that he should deny him, and had dismissed him, and took his leave of him, and the rest, on whose discharge he insisted, when he was apprehended, *ψ. 8.*

And so did another disciple, and that disciple was known unto the high priest] This is thought to be the apostle John, because he frequently speaks of himself, without mentioning his name; and these two, Peter and John, were generally together; and certain it is, that John was present at the cross at the time of Christ's crucifixion; and who is supposed to be known to the high priest, by carrying fish to his house, and selling it to him; so Nonnus says, he was known from his fishing-trade: but it is not probable that he was known, or could be known by the high priest, so as to have any intimacy with him; nor is it likely that he, being a Galilean, would venture in; he was discoverable by his speech, and would have been in equal danger with Peter: rather it was some one of the disciples of Christ, who had not openly professed him; one of the *chief rulers* that believed in him, but, for fear of the Pharisees, had not confessed

(x) *Mish. Yoma*, c. 1. §. 3. 6.

fessed him; it may be Nicodemus, or Joseph of Arimathea, or the man at whose house Christ had eat the passover. In the Syriac version he is called "one of the other disciples;" not of the twelve, but others. However, through his knowledge of the high priest, he

Went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest] Not Annas, but Caiaphas; for Christ was now brought from Annas's house to Caiaphas's, where the scribes and elders were assembled together.

16 But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

But Peter stood at the door without] It being difficult to get in; and perhaps he might be fearful too of going in, lest he should be known; however, he waited, if he could hear or see any thing, and for a proper opportunity of entrance: it would have been well if he had took the hint of providence, access not being easy, and have gone his way; for he was now at the door of temptation: it would have been best for him, if he had kept without; and indeed at a greater distance; but his curiosity had led him thus far, and he hoped for an opportunity of getting nearer, which offered in the following manner:

Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest] Seeing Peter through the window, by the light of the moon, for it was full moon; and knowing him, who he was, concluded he had a mind to come in, and hear and see what he could, steps out,

And spake unto her that kept the door] Which might be thought more properly the business of men-servants; but these being employed in apprehending and guarding Jesus, the maid-servants might be obliged to take this post. The Ethiopic version, in the next verse, calls her "the door-keeper's daughter;" her father might be the porter, and he being busy, she supplied his place. Though there is no need of these conjectures, since it was usual with other nations, and it might be with the Jews, for women to be door-keepers, as Pignorius (y) has shewn out of Plautus, Petronius, Pausanias, and others. However, the other disciple, who was a man of figure and authority, and was known by the servants of the family, ordered her to open the door, and let Peter in; who accordingly did:

And brought in Peter] Into the hall, where Jesus was under the examination of the high priest.

17 Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not.

Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter] She being relieved, either by her father, if porter, or by a fellow-servant, had the opportunity of coming into the hall, where Peter was, and was curious to observe him, who he should be, that that person of note should order him to be admitted, when an affair of so much privacy and importance was transacting; and either by Peter's language, or the trouble that appeared in his countenance, or fancying she had seen him in the temple, or in some part of the city in company with Jesus, addresses him after this manner:

Art not thou also one of this man's disciples?] She speaks of Christ in the vulgar dialect of the Jews, calling him *this man*; not only esteeming him a mere man, but a worthless man; and knowing he had disciples, challenges him as one of them; when, all in a fright and surprise, not expecting such a question to be put to him, without any further thought, rashly and suddenly,

He saith, I am not] He never denied that Christ was God, or the Son of God, or that he was come in the flesh, or that he was the Messiah and Saviour of sinners; but either, that he did not know what the maid said, or the person she spoke of; or, as here, he denied that he was one of his disciples; which was a very great untruth: and many are the aggravations of his fall; which came to pass as soon as ever he was entered almost; and that by the means of a maid, a servant-maid, a very inferior one; and at first perhaps they were alone; and the question put to him might not be in a virulent way, nor proceed from malice, but commiseration of him; and yet he had not resolution enough to own himself a disciple of Jesus; which he might have done, and in all likelihood might have gone safe off directly: but he that had so much confidence as to say, *though all men deny thee, yet will not I*; and had so much courage, as, in the face of a band of soldiers, to draw his sword and smite one of the high priest's servants, but a few hours before, has not spirit enough in him to own his master before a servant-maid!

18 And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.

And the servants and officers stood there] In a certain part of the hall, the middle of it; the Vulgate Latin reads, "by the coals:" it follows,

Who

(y) De Servis, p. 454. 455.

Who had made a fire of coals, for it was cold] Though it was the passover, and harvest near. Dr Lightfoot has observed from our countryman Bid-dulph, who was at Jerusalem at this time of the year, that though in the day-time it was as hot as with us at mid-summer, yet such very great dews fell as made it very cold, especially in the night; and from one of the Jewish canons (z), that the year was not intercalated, (which when done was chiefly on account of the passover) neither for snow nor frost; which, as he justly remarks, supposes there might be frost and snow at the time of the passover. The same is observed in the Talmud (a), where the gloss upon it is, "That they might not desist, on that account, from coming to the "passover." The sense is, that whereas sometimes snow fell about the time of the passover; which might be thought to be an hinderance to some from coming to it; this never was a reason that came into consideration with the sanhedrim, or prevailed upon them to intercalate a month, that so the passover might not fall at a time of year when there was usually snow. The passover was always in the spring of the year, when nights are commonly cold, as they are generally observed to be at the vernal equinox: this night might be remarkably cold; which seems to be suggested by the Perfic version, which reads, "for it was cold "that night;" and the Ethiopic version, "for "the cold of that night was great;" and adds, what is neither in the text, nor true, "for the "country was cold." The Arabic version, as it should seem, very wrongly renders it, "for it was "winter;" since the passover was never kept in the winter-season, but always in the spring, in the month Nisan: the winter-season, with the Jews, were half the month of Cisleu, all Tebet, and half Shebet (b); though this is to be observed in favour of that version, that the Jews distinguish their winter into two parts; the one they call חורף which, as the gloss says, is the strength of winter, the coldest part of it, and which lasts the time beforementioned; and the other they call קור which is the end of winter, and when the cold is not so strong; and half Nisan is taken into this; for they say that half Shebet, all Adar, and half Nisan are reckoned to this part of winter: so that, according to this account, the fourteenth of Nisan, which was the day on which the passover was killed; or at least the fifteenth, which was now begun, was the last day of winter, and so just secures the credit of the above version.

And they warmed themselves, and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself] He was cold both inwardly and outwardly; and being so, he gets into

bad company; and it may be with a view that he might not be suspected, but be taken for one of their own sort, as one who had the same ill opinion of Jesus they had; and by the light of the fire he is again discovered and challenged, which makes way for a second denial.

19 ¶ The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.

The high priest then asked Jesus] Being now brought from Annas to Caiaphas, who was the high priest and mouth of the sanhedrim, and to whom it appertained to hear and try a cause relating to doctrine. And what he did was by putting questions to him, instead of opening the charge against him, and calling for witnesses to support it. The person he interrogated was a greater high priest than himself; was that prophet Moses spoke of, to whom the Jews were to hearken, and no other than the Son of God, and King of Israel; who, when at twelve years of age, asked the doctors questions, and answered theirs, to their great astonishment. He first inquires

Of his disciples] Not so much who they were, and what they were, and how many they were, and where they were now, as for what purpose he gathered them together; whether it was not with some seditious views to overturn the present government, and set up himself as a temporal prince? and this he did, that he might be able to send him, with a charge against him, to the Roman governor: he did not ask for his disciples to come and speak on his behalf, if they had any thing to say for him, which, by their canons (c), was allowed and encouraged: "If any of the disciples (of the "person accused) says, I have a crime to lay to "his charge, they silence him; but if one of the "disciples says, I have something to say in his "favour, they bring him up, and place him between them; nor does he go down from thence "all the day; and if there is any thing in what "he says, שמעו לו "they hearken to him." The Jews indeed pretend (d), that after Jesus was found guilty, a herald went before him forty days declaring his crime, and signifying, that if any one knew any thing worthy in him, to come and declare it; but none were found: but this is all lies and falsehood, to cover their wickedness; no disciple of his was allowed to speak for him. The high priest next asked Jesus

Of his doctrine] Not for the sake of information and instruction, nor to see whether it was according to the scriptures; but if it was a new doctrine, and his own, and whether it tended to idolatry

(z) Maimon. Hilch. Kiddush Chodesh, c. 4. §. 6. (a) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 11. 1. (b) T. Bab. Bava Metsia, fol. 106. 2.

(c) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 40. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrim, c. 10. §. 3. (d) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 43. 1.

latry or blasphemy, and whether it was factious and seditious, that so they might have wherewith to accuse him; for though they had got his person, they were at a loss for an accusation; and yet this self-same man that put these questions, and was fishing for something against him, had before given counsel to put him to death, right or wrong: all this was doing, and these questions were put to Jesus, whilst Peter was denying him.

20 Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.

Jesus answered him] Not to the first of these questions concerning his disciples; not because they had all now forsaken him, and one was denying him; nor because he would not betray them; nor because he would suffer alone; but because if his doctrine was good, it could not be blame-worthy to have disciples, and to teach them: and the charge of sedition, blasphemy, and idolatry they wanted to fasten on him, would sufficiently appear to be groundless by the doctrine he preached; and as to that he answers not directly what he taught, but declares the manner in which he delivered it, and which was such, that they who heard him could not be strangers to it.

I spake openly to the world] With all plainness, freedom, and boldness, without any reserve or ambiguity; and that not to a few persons only, to his own particular disciples, but to all the people of the Jews, who crowded in great numbers to hear him; insomuch that it was said by his enemies, that the world was gone after him.

I ever taught in the synagogue] The Arabic, "the synagogues;" the places of public worship in all parts of the nation, where the Jews met to pray, and read, and hear the word:

And in the temple] At Jerusalem, whenever he was in that city;

Whither the Jews always resort] For prayer, and to offer sacrifice, and particularly at the three grand festivals of the year, the passover, pentecost, and feast of tabernacles, when all the males from all parts appeared before the Lord. Accordingly, the Alexandrian copy, and some others, read, "whither all the Jews resort;" and so read the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions.

And in secret have I said nothing] Not but that our Lord taught in other places than what are here mentioned, as on mountains, in deserts, by the sea-shore, and in private houses, yet generally to great multitudes; and though he sometimes conversed alone, and in secret with his disciples, yet

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what he taught them was either an explanation of what he had said in public, or was perfectly agreeable to it.

21 Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.

Why askest thou me?] He seems surprised at the high priest's conduct, that he should put such questions to him, who stood bound before him; was brought there as a criminal, and was the defendant, and not obliged to accuse himself; nor could it be thought that whatever evidence or testimony he should give, would have much weight with the persons before whom he stood.

Ask them which heard me, what I said unto them] He appeals to his hearers, many of whom were then present; and these his enemies, even his worst enemies: so clear was his case, so free was his doctrine from sedition and blasphemy, so innocent was he in the whole of his deportment and conduct, that he even submits to have his case issued and determined by what his hearers should say of him; and these not his friends, but his enemies; see *Isaiah* i. 8.

Behold they know what I have said] Pointing at some persons present, perhaps the very officers who had been sent to take him before, but returned without him, declaring that "Never man spake like him."

22 And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?

And when he had thus spoken] What was so right and reasonable, in so becoming a manner, without heat or passion:

One of the officers which stood by] It may be one of those who had been sent to him, and had been a hearer of him, whom Jesus might look wistfully at, or point unto, when he said the above words, at which he might be provoked: and therefore

Struck Jesus with the palm of his hand] Or gave him a rap with a rod, or smote him with a staff, as some think, is the sense of the phrase; though the Syriac, agreeable to our version, reads it, he smote him, על פניו "upon his cheek;" gave him, what we commonly call, "a slap on the face;" and which is always esteemed a very great affront, and was a piece of rudeness and insolence to the last degree in this man:

Saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?] This he said, as well as gave the blow, either out of flattery to the high priest, or to clear himself from being a favourer of Christ; which, by what had

4 K

been

been said, he might think would be suspected: some have thought this was Malchus, whose ear Christ had healed; if so, he was guilty of great ingratitude.

23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?

[Jesus answered him] For the high priest took no notice of him, nor any of the sanhedrim, though the action was so insolent and indecent, both as to the manner in which it was done, and the person, an officer, by whom it was done; and considering the circumstances of it, in the palace of the high priest, in his presence, and before so grand a council, and whilst a cause was trying; and it was a barbarous, as well as an impious action, considering the person to whom it was done. Wherefore Jesus replies to him, without making use of his divine power as the Son of God, or discovering any warmth of spirit, and heat of passion, as a man, mildly and rationally argues with him;

[If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil] Meaning, either if he had, to his knowledge, delivered any wicked doctrine in the course of his ministry, or had at that time said any evil thing of the high priest, or any other person, he desires that he would make it to appear, and give proper proof and evidence of it:

[But if well, Why smitest thou me?] If he had said nothing contrary to truth, reason, and good manners, then he ought not to be used and treated in such an injurious way. And moreover, the officer ought to have been corrected by the council, and have been made to pay the two hundred *zuzim*; or pence, the fine for such an affront, according to the Jewish canon, or more, according to the dignity of the person abused (e).

24 Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.

[Now Annas had sent him bound] As he found him, when the captain, band, and officers brought Jesus to him; who having pleased himself with so agreeable a sight, and had asked him some few questions, and perhaps insulted him, sent him away in this manner,

[Unto Caiaphas the high priest] His son-in-law, as the more proper person to be examined before; and especially as the grand council was sitting at his house. This was done before Peter's first denial of Christ; which, it is plain, was in the palace of the high priest, and not in Annas's house;

though there seems no reason on this account to place these words at the end of the 13th verse, as they are by some, since they manifestly refer to time past, and do not at all obscure or hinder the true order of the history, as standing here.

25 ¶ And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not.

[And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself] This is repeated from v. 18. to connect the history, and carry on the thread of the account of Peter's denial of Christ, which is interrupted by inserting the examination of Christ before the high priest, which was made at the same time. Peter stood among, and continued with the servants and officers of the high priest, warming himself by a fire they had made, it being a cold night; and this proved of bad consequence to him. The company and conversation of wicked men should be abstained from; no good is got thereby; continuance among such is very dangerous; men are too often more concerned for their bodies than their souls; Satan baits his temptations for the fleshly and sensitive part; and that which is thought to be for good, is the occasion of hurt.

[They said therefore unto him] The servants and officers, among whom he stood warming himself, having observed what the maid had said to him;

[Art thou not also one of his disciples?] Suspecting that he was, though he had denied it, and therefore press him to give a direct answer: they might observe his countenance to fall when the maid put the question to him; there might be something in his dress, and especially in his speech, which increased the suspicion: but

[He denied it; and said, I am not] A second time. This denial of his being a disciple of Christ, as before, did not arise from a sense of his unworthiness to be one; nor from diffidence and distrust of a right to such a character; but from the fear of men; and being ashamed of Christ, he denies that which was his great mercy, privilege, and glory.

26 One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him?

[One of the servants of the high priest] Hearing him so stiffly deny that he was a disciple of Jesus, when he had great reason to believe he was:

[Being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off] A near relation of Malchus, to whom Peter had done this injury; and who was present at the same time, and

(e) Misa. Bava Kama, c. 8. §. 6.

and no doubt took particular notice of him; and the more, because of what he had done to his kinsman:

Saith unto him, Did not I see thee in the garden with him?] As if he should have said, I saw thee with my own eyes along with Jesus, this very night in the garden, beyond Kedron, where he was apprehended, how canst thou deny it? And wilt thou stand in it so confidently, that thou art not one of his disciples:

27 Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew.

Peter then denied again] “A third time,” as the Ethiopic version renders it; and that, according to other Evangelists, with cursing and swearing; for now he was more affrighted than before, lest should he be taken up, and it be proved upon him, that he was the person that cut off Malchus’s ear, he should be sentenced to a fine, or it may be some capital punishment. The fine for plucking a man’s ears, and which some understand of plucking them off, was four hundred *zuzim* (*f*), or pence; which, as they answer to Roman pence, amount to twelve pounds ten shillings; a sum of money Peter perhaps could not have raised, without great difficulty: and therefore, that it might be believed he was not a disciple of Christ, so not the man, he swears in a profane manner, and imprecates the judgments of God upon him:

And immediately the cock crew] The second time; which was a signal by which he might call to remembrance what Christ had said to him; that *before the cock crowed twice, he should deny him thrice*, Mark xiv. 72. It was now early in the morning, about three o’clock, or somewhat after.

28 ¶ Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas] When Peter had denied him, one of the officers had smote him, the high priest had examined him, and they thought they had enough out of his own mouth to condemn him; they, the chief priests, elders, scribes, and the whole multitude, led him, bound as he was, from Caiaphas’s house,

Unto the hall of judgment] Or the *prætorium*; the place where the Roman governor, who was now Pontius Pilate, used to hear and try causes in; the Romans now having matters and causes relating to life and death in their hands:

And it was early] The morning indeed was come; but it was as soon as it was day; they had been all night in taking and examining Jesus, and consulting what to do with him; and as soon as they could expect the governor to be up, they hurry Jesus away to him, eagerly thirsting after his blood, and fearing lest he should be rescued out of their hands:

And they themselves went not into the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled] That is, the Jews, only the band of Roman soldiers went in; the reason of this was, because it was the house of a Gentile, and with them, מדרות העב'ים טמאים “the dwelling-houses of Gentiles, or idolaters, are unclean (*g*);” yea, if they were the houses of Israelites, and Gentiles were admitted to dwell in them, they were defiled, and all that were in them; for so they say (*h*), “If the collectors for the government enter into a house to dwell in, all in the house are defiled.” They did not think it lawful to let out a house in Judea to an heathen (*i*), or to assist in building a Basilica for them; which they explain to be a palace, in which judges sit to judge men (*k*). Hence the reason of their caution, and which they were the more observant of,

That they might eat the passover] Pure and undefiled; not the passover-lamb, for that they had eaten the night before; but the *Chagigah*, or feast on the fifteenth day of the month. Many christian writers, both ancient and modern, have concluded from hence, that Christ did not keep his last passover, at the same time the Jews did; and many things are said to illustrate this matter, and justify our Lord in it: some observe the distinction of a sacrificial, and commemorative passover; the sacrificial passover is that, in which the lamb was slain, and was fixed to a certain time and place, and there was no altering it; the commemorative passover is that, in which no lamb is slain and eat, only a commemoration made of the deliverance of the people of Israel out of Egypt; such as is now kept by the Jews, being out of their own land, where sacrifice with them is not lawful; and this it is supposed our Lord kept, and not the former: but it does not appear that there was such a commemorative passover kept by the Jews, in our Lord’s time, and whilst the temple stood; and supposing there was such an one allowed, and appointed for those that were at a distance from Jerusalem, and could not come up thither, (which was not the case of Christ and his disciples) it is reasonable to conclude, that it was to be kept, and

(g) Mifn. Ohelot, c. 18. §. 7.

& Moheh, c. 12. §. 12.

(h) Jarchi & Bartenora in ibid. §. 7.

(b) Maimon. Mishcab

(i) Mifn. Avoda Zara, c. 1. §. 8.

was kept at the time the sacrificial passover was, in the room of which it was substituted, as it is by the Jews to this day; so that this will by no means clear the matter, nor solve the difficulty; besides, it is very manifest, that the passover our Lord kept was sacrificial; and such an one the disciples proposed to get ready for him, and did, of which he and they are said to eat: *And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said to him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare, that thou mayest eat the passover?* Mark xiv. 12. And again, *Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed,* Luke xxii. 7. *They made ready the passover,* y. 13. and he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him, y. 14. and he said unto them, *With desire I have desired to eat this passover,* y. 15. Others suggest, that this difference of observing the passover by Christ and the Jews, arose from fixing the beginning of the month, and so accordingly the feasts in it, by the *פאריס*, or appearance of the moon; and that our Lord went according to the true appearance of it, and the Jews according to a false account: but of this, as a fact, there is no proof; besides, though the feasts were regulated and fixed according to the appearance of the moon, yet this was not left to the arbitrary will, pleasure, and judgment of particular persons, to determine as they should think proper; but the sanhedrim, or chief council of the nation sat, at a proper time, to hear and examine witnesses about the appearance of the moon; and accordingly determined, and none might fix it but them (l); and as this was doubtless the case at this time, it is not very reasonable to think, that Christ would differ from them: besides, it was either a clear case, or a doubtful one; if the former, then there would be no room nor reason to keep another day; and if it was the latter, then two days were observed, that they might be sure they were right (m); but then both were kept by all the Jews. And that the time of this passover was well known, is clear from various circumstances; such and such facts were done, so many days before it; six days before it, Jesus came to Bethany, John xii. 1. and two days before it, he was in the same place, Matt. xxvi. 2, 6. and says to his disciples, *Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover,* &c. Others taking it for granted, that Christ kept the passover a day before the usual and precise time, defend it, by observing the despotic and legislative power of Christ, who had a right to dispense with the time of this feast, and could at his pleasure anticipate it, because the betraying of him and his death were so near at hand: that he had such a power will not be disputed; but that he should use it in this

way, does not seem necessary, on account of his death, seeing none but the living were obliged to it; nor so consistent with his wisdom, since hereby the mouths of his enemies would be opened against him, for acting not agreeable to the law of God: moreover, when it is considered that the passover, according to the Jews, was always kept, *במקומו* "in its set time (n)," and was not put off on the account of the sabbath, or any thing else, to another day; and that though when it was put off for particular persons, on account of uncleanness, to another month, yet still it was to be kept on the fourteenth day at even, in that month, Numb. ix. 10, 11. it will not easily be received that Christ observed it a day before the time: besides, the passover-lamb was not killed in a private house, but in the temple, in the court of it, and that always on the fourteenth of Nisan, after noon: so says Maimonides (o), "It is an affirmative command, to slay the passover on the fourteenth of the month Nisan, after the middle of the day—" "The passover is not slain but in the court, as the rest of the holy things." And seeing therefore a passover-lamb was not to be killed at home, but in the court of the priests, in the temple, it does not seem probable, that a single lamb should be suffered to be killed there, for Christ and his disciples, on a day not observed by the Jews, contrary to the sense of the sanhedrim, and of the whole nation. Add to this, that the sacred text is express for it, that it was at the exact time of this feast, when it was come according to general computation, that the disciples moved to Christ to prepare the passover for him, and did, and they with him kept it. The account Matthew gives is very full; *Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread;* that is, when that was come in its proper time and course, *the disciples came to Jesus;* saying unto him, *Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?* He bids them go to the city to such a man, and say, *I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.* And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed, and they made ready the passover; now when the even was come, the time of eating the passover, according to the law of God, *he sat down with the twelve, and as they did eat,* &c. Matt. xxvi. 17—20. And Mark is still more particular, who says, *And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover;* that is, when the Jews killed the passover, on the very day the lamb was slain and eaten by them; and then follows much the same account as before, Mark xiv. 12—18. And Luke yet more clearly expresses it, *Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the pass-*
over

(l) Maimon, Kiddush Hachodesh, c. 2. §. 7, 8.

(m) Ibid. c. 5. §. 6—8.

(n) Maimon, in Mifn, Pefachim, c. 7. §. 4. & Bartenora in ibid. c. 5. §. 4.

(o) Hilchot Korban Pefach, c. 2. §. 3, 3.

over must be killed; according to the law of God, and the common usage of the people of the Jews; yea, he not only observes, that Christ kept the usual day, but the very hour, the precise time of eating it; for he says, *And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him*, Luke xxii. 7—14. Nor is there any thing in this text, that is an objection to Christ and the Jews keeping the passover at the same time; since by the passover here is meant, the *Chagigah*, or feast kept on the fifteenth day of the month, as it is sometimes called: in Deut. xvi. 2. it is said, *Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the Lord thy God, of the flock and the herd*: now the passover of the herd, can never mean the passover-lamb, but the passover-*Chagigah*; and so the Jewish commentators explain it; of the herd, says Jarchi, thou shalt sacrifice for the *Chagigah*; and says Aben Ezra, for the peace-offerings: so Josiah the king is said to give for the passovers, three thousand bullocks, and the priests three hundred oxen, and the Levites five hundred oxen, 2 Chron. xxxv. 7—9. which Jarchi interprets of the peace-offerings of the *Chagigah*, there called *passovers*; and so in 1 Esd. i. 7—9. mention is made of three thousand calves, besides lambs, that Josiah gave for the passover; and three hundred by some other persons, and seven hundred by others: the passage in Deuteronomy, is explained of the *Chagigah*, in both Talmuds (p), and in other writings (q); so besides the passover-lamb, we read of sacrifices slain, *בשר פסח* “in the name of the passover, or on account of it (r);” and particularly of the calf and the young bullock, slain for the sake of the passover (s). And now this is the passover which these men were to eat that day, and therefore were careful not to defile themselves, that so they might not be unfit for it; otherwise had it been the passover-lamb in the evening, they might have washed themselves in the evening, according to the rules of, *פסח יום* “or the daily washing,” and been clean enough to have eat it: besides, it may be observed, that all the seven days were called the *passover*; and he that eat the unleavened bread, is said by eating that, to eat the passover; and thus they invite their guests daily to eat the bread, saying (t), “Every one that is hungry, let him come and eat all that he needs, *פסח*” “and keep the passover.” It is easy to observe the consciences of these men, who were always wont to strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel; they scruple going into the judgment-hall, which belonged to an hea-

then governor, and where was a large number of heathen soldiers; but they could go along with these into the garden to apprehend Christ, and spend a whole night in consulting to shed innocent blood: no wonder that God should be weary of their sacrifices and ceremonious performances, when trusting to these, they had no regard to moral precepts. However, this may be teaching to us, in what manner we should keep the feast, and eat of the true passover, Christ; not with malice and wickedness, as these Jews eat theirs, but with sincerity and truth: besides, a sanhedrim, when they had adjudged any one to death, were forbidden to eat any thing all that day (u); and so, whilst scrupling one thing, they broke through another.

29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man?

Pilate then went out unto them] Either into the street, or rather into the place called the pavement, and in Hebrew *Gabbatha*; see chapter xix. 13. the place where the Jewish sanhedrim used to sit; wherefore, in complaisance to them, since they would not come into his court of judicature, he condescends to go into one of theirs, which shewed great civility and humanity in him:

And said, What accusation bring ye against this man?] Meaning, what offence had he committed? What crime had they to charge him with? What did they accuse him of? And what proof had they to support their charge? His view was, to have the matter stated, the cause opened, and evidence given; that the accused being face to face with the accusers, might answer for himself; and he, as a judge, be capable of judging between them: all which were very commendable in him, and agreeable to the Roman laws; and have an appearance of equity, justice, and impartiality.

30 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.

They answered and said unto him] Offended at the question put to them, and filled with indignation that they should be so interrogated, with an air of haughtiness and insolence reply to him,

If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee] Insinuating, that he was guilty of some very wicked action; not merely of a breach of some of their laws peculiar to them; for then they would have tried and judged him according to them, and not have brought him

(p) T. Hieros. Pesach. fol. 33. 1. T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 70. 2.

(q) Maimon. Korban Pesach, c. 10. §. 12. Moses Kotzenis Mitzvot Tora pr. neg. 349. (r) Mifn. Pesachim, c. 6. §. 5.

(s) T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 3. 1.

(t) Naggadah Shel Pesach, p. 4. Ed. Rittangel.

(u) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 63. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrim, c. 13. §. 4.

him before Pilate; but they suggest, that he was guilty of some mal-practices cognizable by Caesar's court; and which they did not care to mention expressly, lest they should not succeed, not having, it may be, as yet their witnesses ready; and hoped he would have took their own word for it, without any further proof, they being men of such rank and dignity, and of so much knowledge, learning, and religion; and therefore took it ill of him, that he should ask such persons as they were, so famous for their prudence, integrity, and sanctity, such a question: however, they own themselves to be the betrayers and deliverers up of our Lord, which Christ had before foretold, and which Stephen afterwards charged them with.

31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:

Then said Pilate unto them] Either ironically, knowing that they did not, or it was not in their power, to judge in capital causes; or seriously, and with some indignation, abhorring such a method of procedure they would have had him gone into, to condemn a man without knowing his crime, and having evidence of it:

Take ye him, and judge him according to your law] This he said, as choosing to understand them in no other sense, than that he had broken some peculiar law of theirs, though they had otherwise suggested; and as giving them liberty to take him away to one of their courts, and proceed against him as their law directed, and inflict some lesser punishment on him than death, such as scourging, &c. which they still had a power to do, and did make use of:

The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death] Thereby insinuating, that he was guilty of a crime which deserved death, and which they could not inflict; not that they were of such tender consciences, that they could not put him to death, or that they had no law to punish him with death, provided he was guilty; but because judgments in capital cases had ceased among them; nor did they try causes relating to life and death, the date of which they often make to be forty years before the destruction of the temple (x); and which was much about, or a little before the time these words were spoken: not that this power was taken away wholly from them by the Romans; though since their subjection to the empire, they had not that full and free

exercise of it as before; but through the great increase of iniquity, particularly murder, which caused such frequent executions, that they were weary of them (y); and through the negligence and indolence of the Jewish sanhedrim, and their removal from the room *Gazitb*, where they only judged capital causes (z): as for the stoning of Stephen, and the putting of some to death against whom Saul gave his voice, these were the outrages of the zealots, and were not according to a formal process in any court of judicature. Two executions are mentioned in their Talmud; the one is of a priest's daughter that was burnt for a harlot (a), and the other of the stoning of Ben Stada in Lydda (b); the one, according to them, seems to be before, the other after the destruction of the temple; but these dates are not certain, nor to be depended upon: for since the destruction of their city and temple, and their being carried captive into other lands, it is certain that the power of life and death has been wholly taken from them; by which it appears, that *the sceptre is removed from Judah, and a lawgiver from between his feet*; and this they own almost in the same words as here expressed; for they say (c) of a certain man worthy of death, "Why dost thou scourge him?" He replies, Because he lay with a beast. They say to him, Hast thou any witnesses? He answers, Yes; Elijah came in the form of a man, and witnessed. They say, If it be so, he deserves to die. To which he answers, From the day we have been carried captive out of our land, "למה נאמר לך" we have no power to put to death." But at this time, their power was not entirely gone; but the true reason of their saying these words is, that they might wholly give up Christ to the Roman power, and throw off the reproach of his death from themselves; and particularly they were desirous he should die the reproachful and painful death of the cross, which was a Roman punishment: had they took him and judged him according to their law, which must have been as a false prophet, or for blasphemy or idolatry, the death they must have adjudged him to, would have been stoning; but it was crucifixion they were set upon; and therefore deliver him up as a traitor, and a seditious person, in order thereunto.

32 That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.

That

(x) T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 15. 1. Sanhedrim, fol. 41. 1. T. Hieros. Sanhedrim, fol. 18. 1. & 24. 2. Juchasin, fol. 51. 1. Moses Kotsensis pr. affim. 99.

(y) T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 8. 2. Juchasin, fol. 21. 1. (z) Gloss. in T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 8. 2. (d) T. Hieros. Sanhedrim, fol. 24. 2. (b) Ibid, fol. 25. 4. (c) T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 58. 1.

That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled.] That he should be delivered by the Jews to the Gentiles, to crucify him; and that he should be lifted up from the earth, as the serpent upon the pole:

Which he spake, signifying what death he should die.] Matt. xx. 19. John xii. 32, 33. and chapter iii. 14. and which was brought about this way, by the providence of God conducting this whole affair; and was cheerfully submitted to by Christ, in great love to his people, to redeem them from the curse of the law, being hereby made a curse for them.

33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment-hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the king of the Jews?

Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again.] Where he went at first, but the Jews refusing to come in thither to him, he came out to them; and now they speaking out more plainly, that he was guilty of a crime deserving of death; as that he set himself up as a king, in opposition to Cæsar, and taught the people not to pay tribute to him; he goes into the prætorium again,

And called Jesus.] Beckoned, or sent for him; or ordered him to come in thither to him, that he might alone, and the more freely, converse with him; which Jesus did, paying no regard to the superstitious observances of the Jews:

And said unto him, Art thou the king of the Jews?] This he might say, from a rumour that was generally spread, that there was such a person to come, and was born; and by many it was thought, that Jesus was he; and particularly from the charge of the Jews against him, which though not here expressed, is elsewhere; see Luke xxiii. 2. Wherefore Pilate was the more solicitous about the matter, on account of Cæsar, and lest he should be charged with dilatoriness and negligence in this affair: some read these words not by way of question, but affirmation,

Thou art the king of the Jews.] Which method he might make use of, the more easily to get it out of him, whether he was or no; and to this reading, Christ's answer in the next verse seems best to agree.

34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself.] That he was the king of the Jews: Christ's meaning is, whether he asserted this from the sentiments of his own mind; or moved the question from any thing he himself had observed, which

might give him just ground to suspect that he had, or intended to set up himself as the king of that nation:

Or did others tell it thee of me?] Whether the Jews had not intimated some such thing to him, out of malice and ill-will? Not but that Christ full well knew, where the truth of this lay; but he was desirous of convincing Pilate of his weakness, if he so judged of himself, and of his imprudence and hastiness, if he took up this from others; and also to expose the baseness and wickedness of the Jews, to charge him with this, when they themselves would have made him a temporal king, and he refused; and when he had not only paid tribute himself to Cæsar, but had exhorted them to do the like.

35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?

Pilate answered, Am I a Jew?] This he said, in a sort of derision and contempt; who was not a Jew, neither by birth, nor by religion, and so had never imbibed any notions of their king Messiah, nor read any thing about him; and knew nothing of his distinguishing characters and properties, by which he was described, and might be known; and therefore it remained, that what he had said, though not expressed, was not of himself, of his own knowledge or observation, but arose from some intimations and suggestions the Jews had given him:

Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me.] That is, the men of this nation, his countrymen the Jews, who best understood their own laws and books of prophecy; and what expectations they had formed from thence, concerning their king and his kingdom; and the principal of the priesthood, who were accounted men of the greatest learning, piety, and integrity, they had brought him bound before him; they had entered a charge against him, and had delivered him up into his hands, as an enemy to Cæsar, and a traitor to his government:

What hast thou done?] As an occasion of such treatment, and as the foundation of such a charge; surely there must be something in it, or men of such character would never impeach a man altogether innocent, and one of their own country too!

36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

Jesus

Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world] By saying which he tacitly owned he was a king: as such he was set up, and anointed by his Father from everlasting; was prophesied of in the Old Testament; declared by the angel, both when he brought the news of his conception, and of his birth; was owned by many, who knew him to be so in the days of his flesh; and since his resurrection, ascension, and session at God's right hand, more manifestly appears to be one: he also hereby declares, that he had a kingdom; by which he means, not his natural and universal kingdom, as God, and the creator and governor of all things; but his mediatorial kingdom, administered both in the days of his flesh, and after his resurrection; which includes the whole Gospel-dispensation, Christ's visible church-state on earth, and the whole election of grace; it takes in that which will be at the close of time, in the latter day, which will be more spiritual, and in which Christ will reign before his ancients gloriously; and also the kingdom of God, or of heaven, even the ultimate glory: the whole of which is not of this world; the subjects of Christ's kingdom are not of the world, they are chosen and called out of it; the kingdom itself does not appear in worldly pomp and splendor, nor is it supported by worldly force, nor administered by worldly laws; nor does it so much regard the outward, as the inward estates of men; it promises no worldly emoluments, or temporal rewards. Christ does not say it is not *in* this world, but it is not *of* it; and therefore will not fail, when this world does, and the kingdoms thereof. Every thing that is carnal, sensual, and worldly, must be removed from our conceptions of Christ's kingdom, here or hereafter: and to this agrees what some Jewish writers say of the Messiah, and his affairs; "The Messiah, they say (*d*), is separated from the world, because he is absolutely intellectual; but the world is corporal; how then should the Messiah be in this world, when the world is corporal, and, *הוא אלהי לא בשר* the business of the Messiah is divine, and not corporal?" And since this was the case, Caesar's, or any civil government, had no reason to be uneasy on account of his being a king, and having a kingdom; since his kingdom and interests did not in the least break in upon, or injure any others: and that this was the nature of his kingdom, he proves by the following reason;

If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews] If Christ's kingdom had been a worldly one, set up on worldly views, and governed with

worldly policy, and was to answer some worldly ends, Christ would have had servants enough among the Jews, who would have declared for him, and took up arms in his favour against the Romans; his own disciples would not have suffered him to have been betrayed into the hands of the Jews by Judas; nor would he have hindered them from attempting his rescue, as he did Peter; nor would they suffer him now to be delivered by Pilate into their hands, to put him to death; since they had such a prince at the head of them, who was he to make use of his power, was able to drive all the Roman forces before them out of the nation, and oblige a general submission among the Jews, to the sceptre of his kingdom:

But now is my kingdom not from hence] It does not rise out of, nor proceed upon, nor is it supported by worldly principles; wherefore none of the above methods are made use of.

37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

Pilate therefore said unto him] Upon this free and full declaration of Christ, concerning his kingdom office, and the nature of his kingdom:

Art thou a king then?] Or "Thou art a king " then;" for, from his having a kingdom, it might be very justly inferred that he was a king:

Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king] And which was very rightly said; and Christ by these words owns and confesses that he was one: adding,

To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth] The end of Christ's being born, which was of a virgin, in a very miraculous manner, and of his coming into the world, which was by the assumption of human nature, among many other things, was to bear testimony to truth in general; to the whole gospel, the word of truth, and every branch of it, which he brought with him, constantly preached in his life, and confirmed by his death; and particularly to this truth, that he was a king, and had a kingdom in a spiritual sense:

Every one that is of the truth] That is of God, belongs to the sheep of Christ, knows the truth as it is in Jesus, and is on the side of truth, and stands by it,

Heareth my voice] The voice of his Gospel; and that not only externally, but internally; so

as to approve of it, rejoice at it, and distinguish it; and the voice of his commands, so as cheerfully to obey them from a principle of love to him.

38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?] That is in general, or that which Christ then particularly spoke of: many things might be observed in answer to this question, as that There is the truth and faithfulness of God in his word and promises; the truth of grace in the hearts of his people; Jesus Christ himself is truth, he is true God, and true man; the truth of all covenant-transactions, of all types, promises, and prophecies; whatever he said and taught, was truth, and the truth of all doctrine comes from him. The gospel is truth in general, it comes from the God of truth; lies in the scriptures of truth; Christ, who is truth itself, is the substance of it; the Spirit of truth has an hand in it, leads into it, and makes it effectual; the whole of it is true, and every particular doctrine of it; as the manifestation of the Son of God in human nature, his coming into the world to save the chief of sinners, justification by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, atonement by his sacrifice, the resurrection of the dead, &c. The same question is put in the Talmud (c), *מה אמר* What is truth? And it is answered, That he is the living God, and the King of the world: we do not find that our Lord gave any answer to this question, which might be put in a scornful, jeering way; nor did Pilate wait for one; for

When he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews:] As soon as he had put the question about truth, having no great inclination to hear what Christ would say to it; nor did he put it for information-sake, or as having any opinion of Christ, and that he was able to answer it; he directly goes out of the judgment-hall, taking Jesus along with him, and addresses the Jews after this manner:

And saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all] And indeed how should he? There was no sin in his nature, nor guile in his lips, nor any iniquity in his life; the devil himself could find none in him. This confession is both to the shame of Pilate and the Jews; to the reproach of Pilate, that after this he should condemn him; and of the Jews, that after such a fair and full declaration from the judge, they should insist upon his cruci-

fixion; it shews however, that he died not for any sin of his own, but for the sins of others.

39 But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

But ye have a custom] Not a law, either of God or man's, but a custom; and which was not originally observed at the feast of the passover, and perhaps was not of any long standing; but what the Roman governors, by the order of Cæsar, or of their own pleasure, had introduced to ingratiate themselves into the affections of the people; and being repeated once and again, was now looked for:

That I should release unto you one at the passover] Which was at this time; and more than one it seems it was not customary to release:

Will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?] Who they had said called himself so, and was so accounted by others, and which Pilate says, in a sneering, sarcastic way; though he was heartily willing to release him, and was in hopes they would have agreed to it, since nothing could be proved against him; however he proposes it to them, and leaves it to their option.

40 Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

Then cried they all again] For it seems that Pilate had made this proposal once before, and that this was the second time, though not mentioned; yet some copies, and the Syriac, Arabic, Persian, and Ethiopic versions, leave out the word *again*: they all, priests and people, in a very clamorous manner, cried out as one man, with one united voice, all at once,

Saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber] Who was an emblem of God's elect in a state of nature, released and set free when Christ was condemned. These, as he, many of them at least, are notorious sinners, the chief of sinners, robbers and murderers; who have robbed God of his glory, and destroyed themselves; are prisoners, concluded in sin and unbelief, and shut up in the law, and in a pit wherein is no water, in their nature-state; and were, as this man, worthy of death, and by nature children of wrath; and yet children of God by adopting grace, as his name *Bar Abba* signifies, "the Son of the Father:" these, though such criminals, and so deserving of punishment, were let go free, when Christ was taken, condemned and died; and which was according to the wise and secret counsel of Jehovah,

(c) T. Hieros. Sanhedrim, fol. 18. 1.

and is a large discovery of divine grace; and what lays those who are released, under the greatest obligations to live to him who suffered for them, in their room and stead.

CHAP. XIX.

In this chapter is related the cruel sufferings of Christ, he is scourged, mocked, and abused by the soldiers, y. 1—5. the rulers would have him crucified; but Pilate acquitted him, y. 6. the Jews appeal to their law, y. 7. wherefore Pilate examineth him more strictly, y. 8—11. and seeking to release him, is threatened with Caesar's displeasure, y. 12—15. wherefore he delivereth Christ to be crucified, y. 16. Christ beareth his cross, and is crucified between two thieves, y. 17, 18. the superscription on the cross, y. 19—22. the soldiers part his garments, y. 23, 24. he commendeth his mother to the disciple whom he loved, y. 25—27. giveth up the ghost, y. 28—30. they break the legs of the thieves, but pierce Christ's side, y. 31—37. Christ is buried by Joseph of Arimathea, y. 38—42.

THEN Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.

Then Pilate therefore took Jesus] Finding that the Jews would not agree to his release, but that Barabbas was the person they chose, and being very desirous, if possible, to save his life, thought of this method: he ordered Jesus to be taken by the proper officers,

And scourged him] That is, commanded him to be scourged by them; which was done by having him to a certain place, where being stripped naked, and fastened to a pillar, he was severely whipped: and this he did, hoping the Jews would be satisfied therewith, and agree to his dismissal; but though he did this with such a view, yet it was a very unjust action in him to scourge a man that he himself could find no fault in: however, it was what was foretold by Christ himself, and was an emblem of those strokes and scourges of divine justice he endured, as the surety of his people, in his soul, in their stead; and his being scourged, though innocent, shews, that it was not for his own, but the sins of others; and expresses the vile nature of sin, the strictness of justice, and the grace, condescension, and patience of Christ: and this may teach us not to think it strange that any of the saints should endure scourgings, in a literal sense; and to bear patiently the scourgings and chastisements of our heavenly Father, and not to fear the overflowing scourge or wrath of God, since Christ has bore this in our room.

2 And the soldiers platted a crown of

thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe,

And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns] This was an emblem of his being surrounded by wicked men, sons of Belial, comparable to thorns, whilst he hung suffering on the cross; and of the sins of his people compassing him about, which were as thorns, very grievous to him; and of his various troubles in life, and of his being made a curse for us at death; thorns being the produce of the curse upon the earth.

And put it on his head] Not only by way of derision, as mocking at his character, the king of the Jews, but in order to afflict and distress him.

And they put on him a purple robe] Matthew calls it a scarlet robe; and the Arabic and Persic versions here, "a red one:" it very probably was one of the soldier's coats, which are usually red: this was still in derision of him as a king, and was an emblem of his being clothed with our purple and scarlet sins; and of the bloody sufferings of his human nature for them, and through which we come to have a purple covering, or to be justified by his blood, and even to be made truly kings as well as priests unto God.

3 And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands.

And said, Hail, king of the Jews!] Some copies before this clause read, "and they came unto him;" and so read the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, Coptic, and Ethiopic versions; that is, they came and prostrated themselves before him; bowed the knee unto him, and addressed him in a mock way, as if he was an earthly monarch just come to his crown, and whom they wished long to live; thus mocking at his kingly office, and despising him under that character, as many do now: some will not have him to reign over them, but reject him as king; and others, though in words they own him to be king, yet disregard his commands, and act no better part than these scoffing soldiers did:

And they smote him with their hands] "Upon his cheeks," as the Syriac version reads it. These, and many other affronts they gave him; in all which they were indulged by Pilate, and was a pleasing scene to the wicked Jews, whose relentless hearts were not in the least moved hereby, though Pilate hoped they would; and which was his view in allowing the soldiers to use such incivilities and indecencies to him.

4 Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.

Pilate

Pilate therefore went forth again] When all this was done to Jesus, Pilate went again out of the judgment-hall, or however from the place where Jesus had been scourged, and ill used in the manner he was: he went a little before him unto the Jews that stood without,

And saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you] That is, he had ordered him to be brought forth by the soldiers, and they were just bringing him in the sad miserable condition in which he was, that the Jews might see with their own eyes how he had been used:

That ye may know that I find no fault in him] For by seeing what was done to him, how severely he had been scourged, and in what derision and contempt he had been had, and what barbarity had been exercised on him, they might know and believe, that if Pilate did all this, or allowed of it to be done to a man whom he judged innocent, purely to gratify the Jews; that had he found any thing in him worthy of death, he would not have stopped here, but would have ordered the execution of him; of this they might assure themselves by his present conduct. Pilate, by his own confession, in treating, or suffering to be treated in so cruel and ignominious a manner, one that he himself could find no fault in, or cause of accusation against, was guilty of great injustice.

5 Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!

Then came Jesus forth] Out of the judgment-hall, or place where he had been scourged, as soon as Pilate had said these words:

Wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe] With his temples scratched and torn with the thorny crown, and the blood running down from thence, and his face and eyes swollen with the blows he had received from their closed fists, and all besmeared with his own blood and the soldiers spittle; his body appearing to be almost of the same colour with the purple or scarlet robe, through the stripes and lashes he had received, when that was thrown back.

And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!] Not their king, that would have provoked them; though he did say so afterwards, when he found he could not prevail upon them to agree to his release; but *the man*, to move their compassion; signifying, that he was a man as they were, and that they ought to use him as such, and treat him with humanity and pity; and that he was a poor despicable man, as the condition he was in shewed; and that it was a weak thing in them to fear any thing with respect to any change of, or influence

in civil government from one that made such a figure; and therefore should be satisfied with what had been done to him, and dismiss him.

6 When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.

When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him] In this piteous condition, in his mock-dress, and having on him all the marks of cruel usage, enough to have moved an heart of stone: and though they were the principal men of the priesthood, and who made great pretensions to religion and piety, and the officers were their servants and attendants, and all of them used to sacred employments; which might have been thought would have at least influenced them to the exercise of humanity and compassion to fellow-creatures; yet instead of being affected with this sight, and wrought upon by it to have agreed to his release, as Pilate hoped,

They cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him] Which was done in a very noisy and clamorous way; and the repetition of their request shews their malignity, vehemence, and impatience; and remarkable it is, that they should call for, and desire that kind of death the scriptures had pointed out that the Messiah should die, and which was predicted by Christ himself.

Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him] This was not leave to do it, as appears from the reason he gives, in which the innocence of Christ is again asserted; nor did the Jews take it in this light, as is evident from their reply; and it is clear, that after this Pilate thought he had a power either to release or crucify him; and he did afterwards seek to release him; and the Jews made a fresh request to crucify him; upon which he was delivered to be crucified: but this was said in a way of indignation, and as abhorring the action; and is an ironical concession, and a bitter sarcasm upon them, that men who professed so much religion and sanctity, could be guilty of such iniquity, as to desire the death of one that no fault could be found in; and therefore, if such were their consciences, for his part, he desired to have no concern in so unrighteous an action; but if they would, they must even do it themselves.

7 The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

The Jews answered him] Finding they could make nothing of the charge of sedition against him, and that Pilate could not be prevailed upon to adjudge him to death upon that score, they try another method, and charge him with blasphemy; which, if the other had succeeded, they would have concealed; because this, if proved, according to their law, would not have brought on him the kind of death they were desirous of:

We have a law] Meaning the law of Moses, which they had received by his hands from God:

And by our law he ought to die] Referring either to the law concerning blasphemy in general, or concerning the false prophet, or to the having and asserting of other gods, and enticing to the worship of them; in either of which cases death by stoning was enjoined:

Because he made himself the Son of God] The natural and essential Son of god; not by adoption, or on account of his incarnation and mediatorial office; but as being one with the Father, of the same nature with him, and equal to him in all his perfections and glory. This he had often asserted in his ministry, or what was equivalent to it, and which they so understood; and indeed had said that very morning before the high priest in his palace what amounted thereunto, and which he so interpreted; upon which he rent his garments, and charged him with blasphemy: for that God has a Son, is denied by the Jews, since Jesus asserted himself to be so, though formerly believed by them; nor was it now denied that there was a Son of God, or that he was expected; but the blasphemy with them was, that Jesus set up himself to be he: but now it is vehemently opposed by them, that God has a Son; so from *Ecc. iv. 8.* they endeavour to prove (a), that God has neither a Brother, *אין לו אח*, "nor a Son;" "but the holy "blessed God loves Israel, and calls them his "children, and his brethren (b)." All which is opposed to the Christian doctrine relating to the Sonship of Christ. The conduct of these men, at this time, deserves notice; as their craft in imposing on Pilate's ignorance of their laws; and the little regard that they themselves had to them, in calling for crucifixion instead of stoning; and their inconsistency with themselves, pretending before, it was not lawful for them to put any man to death; and now, *they have a law, and by that law, in their judgment, he ought to die.*

8 ¶ When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid;

When Pilate therefore heard that saying] That Jesus had asserted himself to be the Son of God, and that the Jews had a law to put such a person to death that was guilty of such blasphemy,

He was the more afraid] He was afraid to put him to death, or to consent to it before; partly on account of his wife's message to him, and partly upon a conviction of the innocence of Christ in his own conscience: and now he was more afraid, since here was a charge brought against him he did not well understand the meaning of; and a law of theirs pretended to be violated hereby, which should he pay no regard to, might occasion a tumult, since they were already become very clamorous and noisy; and he might be the more uneasy, lest the thing they charged him with asserting, should be really fact; that he was one of the gods come down in the likeness of man; or that he was some demi-god at least, or so nearly related to Deity, that it might be dangerous for him to have any thing to do with him this way: and in this suspicion he might be strengthened; partly from the writings of the Heathens, which speak of such sort of beings; and partly from the miracles he might have heard were performed by Jesus; and also by calling to mind what he had lately said to him, that his kingdom was not of this world, and that he was come into it to bear witness to the truth.

9 And went again into the judgment-hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.

And went again into the judgment-hall] From whence he came out, taking Jesus along with him, in order to interrogate him alone upon this head:

And saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou?] Meaning, not of what country he was, for he knew he was of the nation of the Jews; nor in what place he was born, whether at Bethlehem, or at Nazareth, for this was no concern of his; but, from whence he sprung, who were his ancestors, and whether his descent was from the gods, or from men; and if from the former, from which of them; for as Pilate was an Heathen, he must be supposed to speak as such:

But Jesus gave him no answer] For his question was frivolous, and deserved none; and besides, he was not worthy of one who had used him so ill, when he knew in his own conscience that he was innocent; nor was he capable of taking in an answer, or able to judge whether it was right or wrong; and since Christ was come to die for the salvation of his people, it was not proper he should say any thing that might be a means of hindering it.

10 Then.

(a) Debarim Rabba, §. 2. fol. 237. 3.

(b) Midrash Kehalet, fol. 79. 1.

10 Then said Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

Then saith Pilate unto him] Being angry with him, resenting his silence, and looking upon it as a contempt of him,

Speakest thou not unto me?] He wondered that he stood in no fear of him, who was the Roman governor, his judge; who had the power of life and death; and that he should make no answer to him, who was in so much dignity, and in so high and exalted a station.

Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?] Proudly boasting of his authority to do one or the other. The sudden change of the man from fear, to vain and proud boasting, is to be observed; just now he was afraid of the divine power of Christ, lest he should have any divinity in him; and now he boasts and brags of his own power, and menaces and threatens with his authority to punish with death, even the death of the cross; in which he discovers his wickedness, as a magistrate, to endeavour to terrify one that he himself believed to be innocent: and besides, his assertion is false; for he had no power, neither from God nor man, to crucify innocent men, and release criminals: and moreover, he himself must be self-condemned, who had a power, as he says, of releasing him, and yet did not do it, though he had once and again declared he found no fault in him.

11 Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

Jesus answered] With great intrepidity and courage, with freedom and boldness, as being not at all dismayed with his threatenings, or affected with his proud boasts, and in order to expose the vanity of them:

Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.] Meaning, not from the Jewish sanhedrim, whose court of judicature was in the temple, which was higher than the other part of the city; nor from the Roman emperor, or senate of Rome, the higher powers; by whom Pilate was made governor of Judea, and a judge in all causes relating to life and death; but reference is had to the place from whence he came, and to the decree and council of God above, and the agreement between the eternal three in heaven. Christ speaks of a power he had against

him, that is, of taking away his life; he had no lawful power to do it at all; nor any power, right or wrong, had it not been given him by God: and which is to be ascribed, not merely to the general providence of God, without which nothing is done in this world; but to the determinate counsel of God, relating to this particular action of the crucifying of Christ; otherwise Christ, as God, could have struck Pilate his judge with death immediately, and without so doing could as easily have escaped out of his hands, as he had sometimes done out of the hands of the Jews; and, as man and mediator, he could have prayed to his Father for, and have had more than twelve legions of angels, which would soon have rescued him. But this was not to be; power was given to Pilate from heaven against him; not for any evil he himself had committed, or merely to gratify the envy and malice of the Jews, but for the salvation of God's elect, and for the glorifying of the divine perfections: and to this the Jews themselves agree; "that there is no power below, until that *למעלה*": "power is given from above;" "and the whole of that depends on this (c):"

Therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin] מן דילך "than thine," as the Syrian version adds; and to the same purpose the Persian. Pilate had been guilty of sin already in scourging Christ, and suffering the Roman soldiers to abuse him; and would be guilty of a greater in delivering him up to be crucified, who he knew was innocent: but the sin of Judas in delivering him into the hands of the chief priests and elders, and of the chief priest and elders and people of the Jews, in delivering him to Pilate to crucify him, according to the Roman manner, were greater, inasmuch as theirs proceeded from malice and envy, and was done against greater light and knowledge; for by his works, miracles, and ministry, as well as by their own prophecies, they might, or must have known, that he was the Messiah, and Son of God: and it is to be observed, that as there is a difference in sin, and that all sins are not equal, the circumstances of things making an alteration; so that God's decree concerning the delivery of his Son into the hands of sinful men, does not excuse the sin of the betrayers of him.

12 And from henceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar.

And

(c) Zohar in Gen. fol. 99. 2.

And from henceforth Pilate sought to release him] From the time that Christ spoke the above words; or, as the Syriac version renders it, מִכֵּן הַדָּבָר "because of this," or on account of the words he had spoken; to which agree the Arabic and Ethiopic versions: he sought by all means, and studied every way to bring the Jews to agree to his release: his reasons were, because of the consciousness of guilt, and the danger of contracting more; the sense he might have of a divine being, to whom he was accountable for the exercise of his power; his suspicion that Jesus was the Son of God, or that he was more than a man; for he perceived that power went along with his words, by the effect they had on him: but though he sought to release him, he did not do it, nor use the power he boasted he had; the reason in himself was, he was desirous that the Jews would concur with him; the secret one in providence was, God would not have it so; and yet things must be carried to this pitch, that it might appear that Christ suffered not for his own sins, but ours, and that he suffered willingly:

But the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend] These were the chief priests, scribes, and elders of the people, more especially, and by whom the common people were stirred up to request his crucifixion; these still made a greater outcry, and in a more clamorous way urged, that should he be released, Pilate would shew but little regard to Cæsar, by whom he was raised to this dignity; who had put him into this trust; whom he represented, and in whose name he acted. This was a piece of craftiness in them, for nothing could more nearly affect Pilate, than an insinuation of want of friendship and fidelity to Tiberius, who was then Cæsar, or emperor; and also, it was an instance of great hypocrisy in them, to pretend a regard to Cæsar, when they scrupled paying tribute to him, and would have been glad, at any rate, to have been free from his yoke and government; and is a very spiteful hint, and carries in it a sort of threatening to Pilate, as if they would bring a charge against him to Cæsar, should he let Jesus go with his life, whom they in a contemptuous manner call *this man*: adding,

Whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar] Returning to their former charge of sedition, finding that that of blasphemy had not its effect. Their reasoning is very fallacious, and mere sophistry; for though it might be allowed that whoever set up himself as a temporal king in any of Cæsar's dominions, must be an enemy of his, a rebel against him; and such a declaration might be truly interpreted as high-treason; yet Christ did not give out that he was such a king,

but, on the contrary, that his kingdom was not of this world, and therefore did not assume to himself any part of Cæsar's dominions and government; and though the Jews would have took him by force, and made him a king, he refused it, and got out of their hands.

13 *When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.*

When Pilate therefore heard that saying] Of the Jews, that a dismissal of Jesus would shew an unfriendliness to Cæsar; and gave very broad hints, that they would accuse him to Cæsar of treachery and unfaithfulness, in letting go a man that made pretensions to be a king in his territories; and knowing very well the jealousies and suspicions of Tiberius, and fearing lest it would turn to his own disrepute and disadvantage, immediately

He brought Jesus forth] Out of the judgment-hall, the place where he had been examined in; not to declare his innocence, nor to move their pity, nor to release him, but to pass sentence on him.

And he sat down in the judgment-seat] For that purpose. He had sat but little all this while, but was continually going in and out to examine Jesus, and converse with the Jews; but he now takes his place, and sits down as a judge, in order to give the finishing stroke to this affair; and where he sat down, was

In the place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha] This place, in the Greek tongue, was called Lithostrotos, or "the pavement of stones," as the Syriac version renders it: it is thought to be the room Gazith, in which the sanhedrim sat in the temple when they tried capital causes (*d*); and it was so called, because it was paved with smooth, square, hewn stones: "It was in the north part; half of it was holy, and half of it common; and it had two doors, one for that part which was holy, and another for that which was common; and in that half which was common the sanhedrim sat (*e*)."

So that into this part of it, and by this door, Pilate, though a Gentile, might enter. This place, in the language of the Jews, who at this time spoke Syriac, was *Gabbatha*, from its height, as it should seem; though the Syriac and Persic versions read *Gabbatha*, which signifies a fence, or an inclosure. Mention

(*d*) Gloss. in T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 8. 2.

(*e*) T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 25. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Beth Habbechira, c. 5. §. 17. Bartenora in Misn. Middot, c. 5. §. 3.

Mention is made in the Talmud (*f*) of the upper *Gab* in the mountain of the house; but whether the same with this *Gabbatha*, and whether this is the same with the chamber *Gazith*, is not certain. The Septuagint use the same word as John here does, and call by the same name the pavement of the temple on which the Israelites fell and worshipped God, 2 *Chron.* vii. 3.

14 And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

And it was the preparation of the passover] So the Jews (*g*) say, that Jesus suffered on the eve of the passover; and the author of the blasphemous account of his life says (*h*), it was the eve both of the passover and the sabbath; which account so far agrees with the evangelic history; but then this preparation of the passover was not of the passover-lamb, for that had been prepared and eaten the night before. Nor do I find that there was any particular day which was called *the preparation of the passover* in such sense, and much less that this day was the day before the eating of the passover. According to the law in *Exodus* xii. 3—6. the lamb for the passover was to be separated from the rest of the flock on the *tenth* day of the month, and to be kept up till the *fourteenth*; but this is never called the *preparation* of the passover; and was it so called, it cannot be intended here; the preparing and making ready the passover the Evangelists speak of, were on the same day it was eaten, and design the getting ready a place to eat it in, and things convenient for that purpose, and the killing the lamb, and dressing it, and the like, *Matt.* xxvi. 17, 19. *Mark* xiv. 12, 15, 16. *Luke* xxii. 8, 9, 12, 13. there is what the Jews call פסחא דפרוס which was a space of fifteen days before the passover, and began at the middle of the thirty days before the feast, in which they used to ask questions, and explain the traditions concerning the passover (*i*); but this is never called the preparation of the passover: and on the night of the fourteenth month they sought diligently, in every hole and corner of their houses, for leavened bread, in order to remove it (*k*); but this also never went by any such name: wherefore, if any respect is had to the preparation for the passover, it must either design the preparation of the *Chagigah*, which was a grand festival, commonly kept on the fifteenth day, and which was sometimes called *the passover*; or else the preparation for the

whole feast all the remaining days of it; see the note on chapter xviii. 28. but it seems best of all to understand it only of the preparation for the sabbath, which, because it was in the passover-week, is called the passover-preparation-day: and it may be observed, that it is sometimes only called *the day of the preparation*, and *the preparation*, *Matt.* xxvii. 62. *Luke* xxiii. 54. *John* xix. 31. and sometimes *the Jews preparation-day*, *John* xix. 42. and it is explained by the Evangelist Mark, chapter xv. 42. *It was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath*: on which they both prepared themselves for the sabbath, and food to eat on that day; and this being the time of the passover likewise, the preparation was the greater: and therefore to distinguish this preparation-day for the sabbath, from others, it is called the "passover-preparation;" nor have I observed that any other day is called the preparation but that before the sabbath. The Jews dispute about preparing food for the sabbath on a feast-day, as this was; they seem to forbid it, but afterwards soften their words, and allow it with some proviso's: their canon runs thus (*l*); "A feast-day which falls on the eve of the sabbath, a man may not boil (any thing) at the beginning of the feast-day for the sabbath, but he may boil for the feast-day; and if there is any left, it may be left for the sabbath; and he may make a boiling on the eve of a feast-day, and depend on it for the sabbath: the house of Shammai say, two boilings; and the house of Hillel say, one boiling." Bartenora, on the passage, observes, that some say the reason of this boiling on the evening of a feast-day, is for the honour of the sabbath; for because from the evening of the feast-day, the sabbath is remembered, that which is best is chosen for the sabbath, that the sabbath may not be forgotten through the busyness of the feast-day. The account Maimonides (*m*) gives of this matter is, "On a common day they prepare for the sabbath, and on a common day they prepare for a feast-day; but they do not prepare on a feast-day for the sabbath, nor is the sabbath, מנוחה a preparation for a feast-day." This seems to be contrary to the practice of the Jews in the times of Christ, as related by the Evangelists, understanding by the preparation they speak of, a preparation of food for the sabbath; but what he afterwards says (*n*) makes some allowance for it: "A feast-day, which happens to be on the eve of the sabbath (Friday) they neither bake nor boil, on a feast-day what is eaten on the morrow, on the sabbath; and this prohibition is from the words of the scribes, (not from the word

(*f*) T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 115. 1.

(*g*) T. Bab. Sanhe-

drim, fol. 43. 1. & 67. 1.

(*h*) Toldos Jesu, p. 18.

(*i*) Misa, Shekalim, c. 3. §. 1. & Bartenora in ibid. T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 6. 1.

(*k*) Misa, Pesachim, c. 3. §. 1—3.

(*l*) Misa, Betza, c. 2. §. 1.

(*m*) Hilchot Yom Tob.

c. 1. §. 19.

(*n*) Ibid. c. 6. §. 1.

“word of God) that a man should not boil any thing on a feast-day for a common day, and much less for a sabbath; but if he makes a boiling (or prepares food) on the evening of a feast-day on which he depends, and boils and bakes on a feast-day for the sabbath, lo, this is lawful; and that on which he depends is called the *mingling of food*.” And this food, so called, was a small portion of food prepared on a feast for the sabbath, though not less than the quantity of an olive, whether for one man or a thousand (o); by virtue of which, they depending on it for the sabbath, they might prepare whatever they would, after having asked a blessing over it, and saying (p), “By this mixture it is free for me to bake and boil on a feast-day what is for the morrow, the sabbath; and if a man prepares for others, he must say, For me, and for such an one, and such an one; or, For the men of the city; and then all of them may bake and boil on a feast-day for the sabbath.”

And about the sixth hour] To which agrees the account in *Matt.* xxvii. 45. *Luke* xxiii. 44. but *Mark* says, chapter xv. 25. that it was the third hour, and they crucified him; and Beza says he found it so written in one copy; and so read Peter of Alexandria, Beza's ancient copy, and some others, and Nonnus: but the copies in general agree in, and confirm the common reading, and which is differently accounted for; some by the different computations of the Jews and Romans; others by observing that the Jewish day was divided into four parts, each part containing three hours, and were called the third, the sixth, the ninth, and the twelfth hours; and not only that time, when one of these hours came, was called by that name, but also from that all the space of the three hours, till the next came, was called by the name of the former: for instance, all the space from nine o'clock till twelve was called the third hour; and all from twelve to three in the afternoon the sixth hour: hence the time of Christ's crucifixion being supposed to be somewhat before, but yet near our twelve of the clock, it may be truly here said that it was about the sixth hour; and as truly by *Mark* the third hour; that space which was called by the name of the third hour being not yet passed, though it drew toward an end. This way go *Godwin* and *Hammond*, whose words I have expressed, and bids fair for the true solution of the difficulty: though it should be observed that *Mark* agrees with the other Evangelists about the darkness which was at the sixth hour, the time of Christ's crucifixion, chapter xv. 33, 34. and it

is to be remarked, that he does not say that it was the third hour when they crucified him, or that they crucified him at the third hour; but it was the third hour, and they crucified him, as *Dr Lightfoot* observes. It was the time of day when they should have been at the daily sacrifice, and preparing for the solemnity of that day particularly, which was their *Chagigah*, or grand feast; but instead of this they were prosecuting his crucifixion, which they brought about by the sixth hour. And about this time *Pilate* said, and did the following things:

And he saith unto the Jews, Behold your king! Whom some of your people, it seems, have owned for their king, and you charge with setting up himself as one; see what a figure he makes; does he look like a king? This he said, in order to move upon their affections, that, if possible, they might agree to release him, and to shame them out of putting such a poor despicable creature to death; and as upbraiding them for their folly, in fearing any thing from so mean and contemptible a man.

15 But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. *Pilate* saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but *Cesar*.

But they cried out away with him] As a person hateful and lothesome to them, the sight of whom they could not bear; and this they said with great indignation and wrath, and with great vehemency, earnestness and importunacy, in a very clamorous way; repeating the words

Away with him] They were impatient until he was ordered away for execution; and nothing would satisfy them but the crucifixion of him; and therefore they say,

Crucify him] Which is also repeated in the Syriac version; for this was what they thirsted after, and were so intent upon; this cry was made by the chief priests:

Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? This he said either seriously or jeeringly, and it may be with a view to draw out of them their sentiments concerning *Cæsar*, as well as him; however it had this effect;

The chief priests answered, We have no king but *Cæsar*] Whereby they denied God to be their king, though they used so say, and still say in their prayers; “We have no king but God (q):” they rejected the government of the king *Messiah*, and tacitly

(o) *Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Betas, c. 2. §. 1*
(p) *Maimon. Hilchot Yom Tob, c. 1. §. 2.*

(q) *T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 25. 2. Seder Tephillot, fol. 46. 2. Ed. Basil. fol. 71. 2. Ed. Amstæd.*

tacitly confessed that *the sceptre was departed from Judah*; and what they now said came quickly upon them, and still continues; for according to prophecy, *Hof. iii. 4.* they have been many days and years *without a king*; and this they said in spite to Jesus, and not in respect to Cæsar, whose government they would have been glad to have had an opportunity to shake off. They could name no one as king but Jesus, or Cæsar; the former they rejected, and were obliged to own the latter: it is a poor observation of the Jew (r) upon this passage, that "It shews that before the crucifixion of Jesus, the Roman Cæsars ruled over Israel; and that this Cæsar was Tiberius, who had set Pilate over Jerusalem, as is clear from *Luke iii. 1.* Wherefore here is an answer to the objection of the Nazarenes, who say that the Jews, for the sin of crucifying Jesus, lost their kingdom." To which may be replied, that this is not said by any of the writers of the New Testament, that the kingdom of the Jews was taken away from them for their sin of crucifying Jesus; and therefore this is no contradiction to any thing said by them; this is only the assertion of some private persons, upon whom it lies to defend themselves; and what is asserted is defensible, nor do the words of the text militate against it: for though before the crucifixion of Christ the Jews were tributary to the Roman Cæsars, and Roman governors were sent to preside among them; yet the government was not utterly taken from them, or their kingdom lost; they indeed feared this would be the case, should Jesus succeed and prosper, as he did; saying, *The Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation*, *John xi. 48.* which shews, that as yet this was not done, though for their disbelief and rejection of the Messiah, their destruction was hastening on apace; and after the crucifixion of him, all power was taken from them; the government was seized upon by the Romans entirely, and at last utterly destroyed; besides, the Jews did not own Cæsar to be their king, though they said this now to serve a turn; and after this they had kings of the race of Herod over them, though placed there by the Roman emperor or senate.

16 Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.

Then delivered he him therefore] Perceiving he could not by any means work upon them, and that nothing would satisfy them but his death; he therefore passed sentence on him, and gave him up to their will,

Unto them to be crucified] As they requested, and which was done in a judicial way, and all by divine appointment, according to the counsel and foreknowledge of God:

And they took Jesus, and led him away] Directly from the judgment-hall, out of the city to the place of execution, whither he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, without opening his mouth against God or man; but behaved with the utmost patience, meekness, and resignation.

17 ¶ And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called *the place of a skull*, which is called in the Hebrew *Golgotha*:

And he bearing his cross] Which was usual for malefactors to do, as Lipsius (s) shews out of Artemidorus, and Plutarch; the former says, "The cross is like to death, and he that is to be fixed to it, first bears it;" and the latter says, "And every one of the malefactors that are punished in body, carries out his own cross." So Christ when he first went out to be crucified, carried his cross himself, until the Jews meeting with Simon the Cyrenian, obliged him to bear it after him; that is one part of it; for still Christ continued to bear a part himself: of this Isaac was a type, in carrying the wood on his shoulders for the burnt-offering; and this shewed that Christ was made sin, and a curse for us, and that our sins and the punishment which belonged to us, were laid on him, and bore by him; and in this he has left us an example to go forth without the camp, bearing his reproach:

Went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha] And signifies a man's skull: it seems, that as they executed malefactors here, so they buried them here; and in process of time, their bones being dug up to make room for others, their skulls, with other bones, lay up and down in this place; from whence it had its name in the Syriac dialect, which the Jews then usually spake. Here some say Adam's skull was found, and that it had its name from thence. This was an ancient tradition, as has been observed in the notes on *Matt. xxvii. 33.* and *Luke xxiii. 33.* The Syriac writers have it (t), who say, "When Noah went out of the ark there was made a distribution of the bones of Adam; to Shem his head was given, and the place in which he was buried is called *Karkaphta*; where likewise Christ was crucified;" which word signifies a *skull*, as *Golgotha* does: and so likewise the Arabic writers (u); who affirm that Shem said these

(r) R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna par. 2. c. 37. p. 446.

(s) De Cruce, l. 2. c. 5. p. 76. (t) Bar Bahloh spud Castell. Lexic. Polyglot. col. 3466. (u) Elmacinus p. 13. Patricides, p. 12. spud Hottinger Smegma oriental. l. 1. c. 8. p. 257.

these words to Melchizedek, "Noah commanded
"that thou shouldst take the body of Adam, and
"bury it in the middle of the earth; therefore let
"us go, I and thou, and bury it. Wherefore
"Shem and Melchizedek went to take the body
"of Adam, and the angel of the Lord appeared
"to them and went before them, till they came
"to the place Calvary, where they buried him,
"as the angel of the Lord commanded them."

The same also had the ancient fathers of the christian church: Cyprian (x) says, that it is a tradition of the ancients, that Adam was buried in Calvary under the place where the cross of Christ was fixed; and Jerom makes mention of it more than once; so Paula and Eustochium, in an epistle supposed to be dictated by him, or in which he was assisting, say, (y) in this city, meaning Jerusalem, yea in this place Adam is said to dwell, and to die; from whence the place where our Lord was crucified is called *Calvary*, because there the skull of the ancient man was buried. And in another place he himself says (z), that he heard one disputing in the church and explaining, *Eph. v. 14.* of Adam buried in Calvary, where the Lord was crucified, and therefore was so called. Ambrose (a) also takes notice of it; The place of the cross, says he, is either in the midst of the land, that it might be conspicuous to all, or over the grave of Adam, as the Hebrews dispute. Others say that the hill itself was in the form of a man's skull, and therefore was so called; it was situated, as Jerom says (b), on the north of mount Zion, and is thought by some to be the same with the hill Gareb, in *Jer. xxxi. 39.* It was usual to crucify on high hills, so Polyrates was crucified upon the highest top of mount Mycale (c).

18 Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

Where they crucified him] Namely, at Golgotha, the same with *Calvary*; and so had what they were so desirous of:

And two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst] These other two men were thieves, as the other Evangelists declare; among whom Christ was placed, being numbered and reckoned among the transgressors: he was no transgressor of the law of God himself, but he was accounted as such by men, and was treated as if he had been one by the justice of God; he, as a surety, standing in the law-place and stead of his people; hence he died in their room, and for their

sins: this shews the low estate of Christ, the strictness of justice, the wisdom of God in salvation, and the grace and love of the Redeemer; who condescended to every thing, and every circumstance, though ever so reproachful, which was necessary for the redemption of his people, and the glory of the divine perfections, and for the fulfilment of purposes, promises, and predictions.

19 ¶ And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.

And Pilate wrote a title] Luke calls it a *super-scription*; Mark the *super-scription* of his accusation; and Matthew the *accusation* itself: it contained the substance of the charge against him, and was written upon a table or board, and nailed to the cross, as Nonnus suggests; to this is the allusion, *Col. ii. 14.* The form of it was drawn up by Pilate, his judge, who ordered it to be transcribed upon a proper instrument, and placed over him:

And put it on the cross] Not with his own hands, but by his servants, who did it at his command; for others are said to do it, *Matt. xxvii. 37.* It was put "upon the top of the cross," as the Perse version reads it; "over him, or over his head," as the other Evangelists say; and may denote the rise of his kingdom, which is from above, the visibility of it, and the enlargement of it through the cross:

And the writing was] The words written in the title were,

Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews] *Jesus* was his name, by which he was commonly called and known, and signifies a Saviour, as he is of all the elect of God; whom he saves from all their sins, by bearing them in his own body on the cross, and of whom he is the able and willing, the perfect and compleat, the only and everlasting Saviour: he is said to be *of Nazareth*; this was the place of which he was an inhabitant; here Joseph and Mary lived before his conception; here he was conceived, though born in Bethlehem; where he did not abide long, but constantly in this place, till he was about thirty years of age; this title was sometimes given him as a term of reproach, though not always: *the King of the Jews*; which both expresses his accusation, and asserts him to be a King.

20 This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.

(x) De resurrectione Christi, p. 479.

(y) Epist. Mar-

celly, fol. 42. l. tom. 1.

(z) Comment. in Eph. v. 14.

(a) Comment. in Luc. xx. 33.

(b) De locis Hebraicis,

fol. 90. r.

(c) Valer. Maxim. l. 6. c. ult.

This title then read many of the Jews] Who were in great numbers at the place of execution, rejoicing at his crucifixion, and insulting him as he hung on the cross; *quoniam multi ex illis*

For the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh unto the city] Golgotha, the place of Christ's crucifixion, was not more than two furlongs, or a quarter of a mile from the city of Jerusalem; so that multitudes were continually going from thence to see this sight; the city also being then very full of people by reason of the feast of the passover; to which may be added, that the cross stood by the way side, where persons were continually passing to and fro, as appears from *Matt. xxvii. 39. Mark xv. 29.* and where it was usual to erect crosses to make public examples of malefactors, and to deter others from committing the like crimes: so Alexander, the emperor, ordered an eunuch to be crucified by the way side, in which his servants used commonly to go to his suburb (d) or country house: Cicero says (e), "The Mamertines, according to their own usage and custom, crucified behind the city, in the Pompeian way;" and Quinctilian observes (f) "As often as we crucify criminals, the most noted ways are chosen, where most may behold, and most may be moved with fear." And now Christ being crucified by a public road-side, the inscription on the cross was doubtless read by more than otherwise it would: *multos in itinere videri poterat*

And it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin] That it might be read by all, Jews, Greeks, and Romans; and to shew that he is the Saviour of some of all nations; and that he is King over all. These words were written in Hebrew letters in the Syriac dialect, which was used by the Jews, and is called the Hebrew language, *א, ב, ג, ד, ה, ו, ז, ח, ט, י, כ, ל, מ, נ, ס, ע, פ, צ, ק, ר, ש, ת.* and in which it is most likely Pilate should write these words, or order them to be written; and which, according to the Syriac version, we now have, were thus put, *ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܢܗܪܝܢܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ*; in Greek the words stood as in the original text, thus, *Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων*; and in the Latin tongue, as may be supposed, after this manner, *Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judæorum*. These three languages may be very well thought to be understood by Pilate; at least so much of them as to qualify him to write such an inscription as this. The Latin tongue was his mother-tongue, which he must be supposed well to understand; and the Greek tongue was very much used by the Romans, since their conquest of the Grecian monarchy; and the emperors edicts were generally published in Greek, which it was therefore necessary for Pi-

late to understand; and as he was a governor of Judea, and had been so for some time, he must have acquired some knowledge of the Hebrew language; and these being the principal languages in the world, he chose to write this title in them; that persons coming from all quarters might be able to read it, and understand it in some one of them.

21 Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.

Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate] Who were not only informed of this inscription, but might read it themselves, for they were present at the crucifying of Christ, and mocked at him as he hung on the tree; these, when they read the title, were greatly offended at it, partly because it was doing too great an honour to Jesus to call him *the king of the Jews*: and partly because it fixed a public brand of infamy upon their nation, that a king of theirs should be crucified; wherefore they went to Pilate and addressed him, saying,

Write not the king of the Jews] Because they did not own him for their king, which this title seemed to suggest, nor had he in their opinion any right to such a character; wherefore they desired that in the room of these words he would be pleased to put the following,

But that he said, I am king of the Jews] That so he might be thought to be a seditious person and a traitor, one that laid claim to the temporal crown and kingdom of Israel, and one that suffered justly for attempts of that kind.

22 Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.

He seems to say this, as one angry and displeased with them; either because they would not consent to release Jesus, which he was desirous of, but pressed him so very hard to crucify him; or at their insolence, in directing him in what form to put the superscription, which he determines shall stand unaltered, as he had wrote it. This he said, either because he could not alter it after it was written, for it is said (g), that "A pro-consul's table is his sentence, which being once read, not one letter can either be increased or diminished; but as it is recited, so it is related in the instrument of the province." Or if he could have altered it, he was not suffered by God to do it; but was so directed, and over-ruled by divine providence, as to write, so to persist in, and abide by what he had wrote inviolably; which is the sense of his words. Dr Lightfoot has given several

(d) Liphos de Cruce, l. 3. c. 13. p. 158.
in Verrem, l. 5. p. 604.

(e) Orat. 10.

(f) Declamat. 275.

(g) Apulei Florid. c. 9.

several instances out of the Talmud, shewing that this is a common way of speaking with the Rabbins; and that words thus doubled signify that what is spoken of stands good, and is irrevocable: so a widow taking any of the moveable goods of her husband deceased for her maintenance, it is said (b), מה שתפסוק חתן "what she takes, she takes;" that is, she may lawfully do it, and retain it; it continues in her hands, and cannot be taken away from her; and so the gloss explains it, "They do not take it from her." And in the same way Maimonides (i) interprets it. So of a man that binds himself to offer an oblation one way, and he offers it another way, מה שחביא חביא "What he has offered, he has offered (k);" what he has offered is right, it stands good, and is not to be rejected. And again; among the rites used by a deceased brother's wife towards him that refuses to marry her, if one thing is done before the other, it matters not, מה שעשה עשה (l) "what is done, is done;" and is not to be undone, or done over again in another way; it stands firm and good, and not to be objected to. And the same writer observes, that this is a sort of prophecy of Pilate, and which should continue, and for ever obtain, that the Jews should have no other King Messiah than *Jesus of Nazareth*; nor have they had any other; all that have risen up have proved false Messiahs; nor will they have any other; nor indeed any king, until they seek the Lord their God, and David their king, Hosea iii. 5. that is, the Son of David, as they will do in the latter day; when they shall be converted, and when they shall own him as their king, whom their ancestors at this time were ashamed of.

23 ¶ Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.

Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus] The crucifixion of Christ was at the request and solicitation of the Jews, was ordered by the Roman governor, and performed by the Roman soldiers; the sinful men into whose hands Christ was to be delivered:

Took his garments] Which they had stripped his body of, crucifying him naked; as what properly belonged to them, it being usual then, as now, for executioners to have the clothes of the persons they put to death; these were his inner garments:

And made four parts, to every soldier a part] For it seems there were four of them concerned in his execution, and who were set to watch him:

And also his coat] Or upper-garment.

Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout] In such an one, the Jews say (m), Moses ministered; and of this sort and make was the robe of the high priest, said to be of woven work, Exod. xxiii. 32. upon which Jarchi remarks, ברוש, "and not with a needle;" it was all woven, and without any seam; and so the Jews say (n) in general of the garments of the priests: "The garments of the priests are not made of needle-work, but of woven work; as it is said, Exod. xxxviii. 32. Abai says, It is not necessary (that is, the use of the needle) but for their sleeves; according to the tradition, The sleeve of the garments of the priests is woven by itself, and is joined to the garment; and reaches to the palm of the hand." This was an entire woven garment from top to bottom, excepting the sleeves, which were wove separately and sewed to it; "but the coat of the high priest, Jacob Jehudah Leon says (o), was a stately woollen coat of a sky-colour, wholly woven, all of one piece, without seam, without sleeves." Such a garment Christ our great high priest wore, which had no seam in it, but was a curious piece of texture from top to bottom. The very learned Braunius (p) says, he has seen such garments in Holland, and has given very fine cuts of them, and also of the frame in which they are wrought. What authority Nonnius had to call this coat a black one, or others for saying it was the work of the virgin Mary, I know not.

24 They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

They said therefore among themselves] When they saw what a curious piece of work it was, and that it was pity to divide it into parts; and besides, that it would have been rendered entirely useless thereby; they moved it to each other, saying,

Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled] Not that they knew any thing of the scripture, or had any intention

(b) T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 96. 1.

§. 10.

(i) Hikhot Ishot, c. 18.

(k) T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 3. 1.

(l) T. Bab.

Yebamot, fol. 106. 2.

(m) T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 11. 2. Gloss in ibid.

(n) T. Bab. Yoma, c. 7. fol. 72. 2. Maimon. Hilch Cele Hamikdash, c. 8.

§. 16.

(o) Relation of memorable things in the Tabernacle, &c. c. 5. p. 23.

(p) De vestitu Sacerdot. Hab. l. 1. c. 16. p. 346, 360, 361.

tention of fulfilling it hereby, but they were so directed by the providence of God, to take such a step; whereby was literally accomplished the passage in *Psalms* xxii. 18.

Which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots] The whole psalm is to be understood of the Messiah, not of David as some do (q); many passages in it cannot be applied to him, such as speak of the dislocation of his bones, the piercing of his hands and feet, and this of parting his garments, and casting lots for his vesture; all which had their literal accomplishment in Jesus: nor can it be understood of Esther, as it is by some Jewish (r) interpreters; there is not one word in it that agrees with her, and particularly not the clause here cited; and there are some things in it which are manifestly spoken of a man, and not of a woman, as *Y. 8, 24*. nor can the whole body of the Jewish nation, or the congregation of Israel be intended, as others say (s); since it is clear, that a single person is spoken of throughout the psalm, and who is distinguished from others, from his brethren, from the congregation, from the seed of Jacob and Israel, *Y. 22, 23*; and indeed, no other than the Messiah can be meant; he is pointed at in the very title of it, *Ajeleth Shabar*, which words, in what way soever they are rendered, agree with him; if by "the morning-daily sacrifice," as they are by the Targum; he is *the Lamb of God, who continually takes away the sins of the world*; and very fitly is he so called in the title of a psalm which speaks so much of his sufferings and death, which were a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of his people: or by "the morning-star," as others (t) interpret them; Christ is the bright and morning-star, *the day-spring from on high*, the sun of righteousness, and light of the world: or by "the morning-help," as in the Septuagint; Christ had early help from God in the morning of his infancy, when Herod sought his life, and in the day of salvation of his people; and early in the morning was he raised from the dead, and had glory given him: or by "the morning-hind," which seems best of all, to which he may be compared; as to a *roe* or *hart*, in *Cant. ii. 9, 17.* and *chap. viii. 14.* for his love and loveliness, and for his swiftness and readiness in appearing for the salvation of his people; and for his being hunted by Herod in the morning of his days; and being encompassed by those *dogs* the scribes and Pharisees, Judas and the band of soldiers; see *Y. 16*. The first words of the psalm were spoken by Jesus the true Messiah, when he hung upon the cross, and are truly applied to him-

self; his reproaches and sufferings endured by him there, are particularly and exactly described in it, and agree with no other; the benefits which the people of God were to enjoy, in consequence of his sufferings, and the conversion of the Gentiles spoken of in it, which is peculiar to the days of the Messiah, shew to whom it belongs. The Jews themselves are obliged to interpret some parts of it concerning him; they sometimes say (u), that by *Ajeleth Shabar* is meant the Shekinah, a name that well suits with the Messiah Jesus, who tabernacled in our nature; the 26th verse is applied by Jarchi to the time of the redemption, and the days of the Messiah; so that upon the whole, this passage is rightly cited with respect to the Messiah, and is truly said to be fulfilled by this circumstance, of the soldiers doing with his garments as they did: *Exod. xxxix. 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.*

These things therefore the soldiers did] Because they were before determined and predicted that they should be done; and therefore they were disposed and directed by a superior influence, in perfect agreement with the freedom of their wills, to do these things. The whole of this account may be spiritually applied. The scriptures are the garments of Christ; or, as a prince of Anhalt said, the swadling-clothes in which the infant of Bethlehem was wrapt; these exhibit and shew forth Christ in his glory, and by which he is known and bore witness to, and are pure and incorrupt, fragrant and savory. Heretics are the soldiers that rend and tear the scriptures in pieces; part them, add unto them, or detract from them; who corrupt, pervert, wrest, and misapply them. but truth is the seamless coat; it is all of a piece, is of God, there is nothing human in it; though it may be played with, betrayed, sold, or denied, it cannot be destroyed; but is, and will be preserved by divine providence: or the human nature of Christ is the vesture, with which his divine person was as it were covered, was put on and off, and on again as a garment; is of God, and not man; is pure and spotless; and though his soul and body were parted asunder for a while, this could never be parted from his divine person: or else the righteousness of Christ may be signified by this robe, which is often compared to one, because it is put on the saints, and they are clothed with it; it covers, keeps warm, protects, beautifies, and adorns them; this is seamless, and all of a piece, and has nothing of mens works and services tacked unto it; is enjoyed by a divine lot by some men, and not all, and even such as have been sinful and ungodly; it is pure, perfect, and will last for ever.

(q) R. R. in Kimchi in *psal. 22.*

(r) *psal. 22.*

(s) Vid. Kimchi & Abendana in *ibid.*

(t) R. R. in Jarchi in

(u) Kimchi & Ben Melech in *ibid.*

(u) Zohar in *Lev. fol. 5. 4.* & *Imre Bina* in *ibid.*

25 ¶ Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

Now there stood by the cross of Jesus] So near as not only to see him, but to hear him speak :

His mother] The mother of Jesus, Mary; which shewed her affection to Christ, and her constancy in abiding by him to the last; though it must be a cutting sight: and now was fulfilled Simeon's prophecy, *Luke ii. 35.* to see her son in such agonies and sorrow, and jeered and insulted by the worst of men; and though she herself was exposed to danger, and liable to be abused by the outrageous multitude; and it also shewed that she stood in need, as others, of a crucified Saviour; so far was she from being a copartner with him in making satisfaction for sin, as the papists wickedly say :

And his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas] The Syriac, Persic and Ethiopic versions distinguish "Mary the wife of Cleophas" from his mother's sister, by placing the copulative *and* between them, and so make two persons; whereas one and the same is intended, and who was the sister of Mary, the mother of Christ; not her own sister, for it is not likely that two sisters should be of the same name; but her husband Joseph's sister, and so hers; or else Cleophas was Joseph's brother, as Eusebius from Hegesippus says (x): and who was also not the daughter of Cleophas, as the Arabic version has here supplied it; much less the mother of him; but his wife, as is rightly put in our translation: for, according to the other Evangelists, she was the mother of James and Joses, and who were the sons of Cleophas, or Alpheus; which are not the names of two persons, nor two names of one and the same person, but one and the same name differently pronounced; his true name in Hebrew was, חֵלְפִי אוֹ חֵלְפָא אוֹ חֵלְפִי "Chelphi, or Chelpbai, or Chilphi," a name frequently to be met with in Talmudic and Rabbinic writings; and so a Jewish writer (y) observes, that חֵלְפִי הוּא חֵלְפָא, "Chilpha is the same as Alpha;" and in Greek may be pronounced either *Cleophas*, or *Alpheus*, as it is both ways: ignorance of this has led interpreters to form different conjectures, as that either the husband of this Mary had two names; or that she was twice married to two different persons, once to Alpheus, and after his death to Cleophas; or that Cleophas was her father, and Alpheus her husband; for neither of which is there any foundation. She was no doubt a believer in Christ, and came and stood by his cross; not merely to keep her sister company, but out of affection to Jesus, and to testify her faith in him :

(x) Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 3. c. 11. (y) Juchasin, fol. 92. 1.

And Mary Magdalene] Out of whom he had cast seven devils, and who had been a true penitent, a real believer in him, an hearty lover of him, was zealously attached to him, and followed him to the last. Three Marias are here mentioned as together; and it is observable, that the greater part of those that are taken notice of, as following Christ to the cross, and standing by it, were women, the weaker, and timorous sex, when all his disciples forsook him and fled; and none of them attended at the cross, as we read of, excepting John; no, not even Peter, who boasted so much of his attachment to him. These good women standing by the cross of Christ, may teach us to do, as they did, look upon a crucified Christ, view his sorrows, and his sufferings, and our sins laid upon him, and born and taken away by him; we should look unto him for pardon, cleansing, and justification, and, in short, for the whole of salvation: we should also weep, as they did, whilst we look on him; shed even tears of affection for, and sympathy with him; of humiliation for sin, and of joy for a Saviour: and likewise should abide by him as they did, by his person, offices and grace; by the doctrine of the cross, continuing stedfastly in it; and by the ordinances of Christ, constantly attending on them, and that notwithstanding all the reproaches and sufferings we may undergo.

26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

When Jesus therefore saw his mother] Standing near him, within the reach of his voice, as well as sight, he took notice of her, and shewed a concern for her temporal, as well as for her eternal good :

And the disciple standing by] Either by his cross, or by his mother, or both :

Whom he loved] Meaning John, the writer of this Gospel, who for modesty's sake often describes himself in this manner; he being distinguished by Christ from the rest, by some peculiar marks of affection as man; though as God, and as the Redeemer, he loved his disciples alike, as he does all his true and faithful followers :

He saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!] Meaning not himself, but the disciple, who was her son, not by nature, nor adoption; but who would shew himself as a son, by his filial affection for, care of, honour and respect unto her. Christ calls her not *mother*, but *woman*; not out of disrespect to her, or as ashamed of her; but partly that he might not raise, or add strength to her passions,

sions, by a tenderness of speaking; and partly to conceal her from the mob, and lest she should be exposed to their rude insults; as also to let her know that all natural relation was now ceasing between them; though this is a title he sometimes used to give her before.

27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

Then saith he to the disciple] The same disciple, John,

Behold thy mother!] Take care of her, and provide for her, as if she was thine own mother: this shews the meanness of Christ, who had nothing to leave her, though Lord of all; it is very probable that Joseph was dead, and Mary now a widow; and whereas Christ had taken care of her, and maintained her hitherto, he now, in his dying moments, commits her to the care of this disciple; which is an instance of his humanity, and of his regard to every duty; and this in particular, of honouring parents, and providing for them in distresses and old age:

And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home] Or house; so the Septuagint render *ἰς τὸ οἶκος* "to his house," by *us ra idia*, in *Esth.* vi. 12. the phrase here used, and in chapter xvi. 32. Some say she lived with John at Jerusalem, and there died; and others say, that she died in the twelfth year after the resurrection of Christ, being 59 years of age, and was buried by John in the garden of Gethsemane. Where his house was is not certain, whether at Jerusalem or in Galilee, nor how long she lived with him; but this is not to be doubted, that he took care of her, and provided for her as if she was his own mother; and his doing this forthwith, shews his great regard to Christ, his readiness and cheerfulness to comply with his orders and directions, and his unfeigned love unto him.

28 ¶ After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

After this] After he had committed his mother to the care of John, which was about the sixth hour before the darkness came over the land; and three hours after this was the following circumstance, which was not without the previous knowledge of Christ:

Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished] Or just upon being accomplished, were as good as finished, and as they were to be, would be in a very short time; even all things relating to his sufferings, and the circumstances of them, which

were afore appointed by God, and foretold in prophecy, and of which he had perfect knowledge:

That the scripture might be fulfilled] Might appear to have its accomplishment, which predicted the great drought and thirst that should be on him, *Psal.* xxii. 15. and that his enemies at such a time would give him vinegar to drink, *Psal.* lxxix. 21.

Saith, I thirst] Which was literally true of him, and may be also understood spiritually of his great thirst and eager desire after the salvation of his people.

29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.

Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar] In a place near at hand, as Nonnus observes; not on purpose, for the sake of them that were crucified, either to refresh their spirits, or stop a too great effusion of blood, that they might continue the longer in their misery; but was for the use of the soldiers who crucified Christ, vinegar being part of the allowance of Roman soldiers (a), and what they used to drink: sometimes it was mixed with water; which mixed liquor they called *Posca* (a), and was what even their generals sometimes used; as Scipio, Metellus, Trajan, Adrian, and others: vinegar was also used by the Jews for drink, as appears from *Ruth* ii. 14. and *dip thy morsel in the vinegar*, which Boaz's reapers had with them in the field; because of heat, as the commentators say (b); that being good to cool and to extinguish thirst; for which reason the soldiers here offer it to Christ; though the Chaldee paraphrase of the above place, makes it to be a kind of sauce or pap boiled in vinegar; and such an *Embanma* made of vinegar the Romans had, in which they dipped their food (c); but this here seems to be pure vinegar, and to be different from that which the other Evangelists speak of, which was mingled with gall, or was four wine with myrrh, *Matt.* xxvii. 34. *Mark* xv. 23. Vinegar indeed is good to revive the spirits, and hyssop, which is after mentioned, is an herb of a sweet smell; and if the reed, which the other Evangelists make mention of, was the *sweet calamus*, as some have thought, they were all of them things of a refreshing nature. Vinegar was also used for stopping blood (d), when it flowed from wounds in a large quantity; and

(a) Julian. Imperator. Epist. 27. p. 161. Vid. Lydium de re militari, l. 6. c. 7. p. 245. (a) Salmuth. in Panetholl.

rerum memorab. par. 1. Tit. 53. p. 274. (b) Jarchi & Aben Ezra in loc. (c) Salmuth. ibid. par. 2. Tit. 2. p. 83.

(d) Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 31. c. 21.

of the same use were sponges; hence Tertullian (e) mentions *spongiæ retiariorum*, the sponges of the fencers, which they had with them to stop any effusion of blood that should be made in their exercises: but then it can hardly be thought that these things should be in common prepared at crucifixions for such ends, on purpose to linger out a miserable life a little longer, which would be shocking barbarity; and especially that such a provision would ever be made at this time on such an account; since the Jews sabbath drew nigh, and they were in haste to have the executions over before that came on, that the bodies might not remain on the crosses on that day; for which reason they would do nothing at this time however to prolong the lives of the malefactors: wherefore it is most reasonable to think, that this vessel of vinegar was not set for any such purpose, but was for the use of the soldiers; and therefore this being at hand when Christ signified his thirst, they offered some of it in the following manner:

And they filled a sponge with vinegar] It being the nature of a sponge (which Nonnus here calls *πλασμα θαλάσσης*, "A branch of the sea," because it grows there;) to soak up any thing that is liquid, and which may be again squeezed and sucked out of it. Hence the Jews say (f) of it, ספוג שבלע "the sponge which swallows up liquids;" and used it for such a purpose:

And put it upon hyssop] Meaning not the juice of hyssop, into which some have thought the sponge with vinegar was put, but the herb, and a stalk of it: the other Evangelists say, it was upon a reed; meaning either that the sponge with the hyssop were put about a reed, and so given him: or rather it was a stalk of hyssop, which was like a reed or cane; and in this country of Judea grew very large, sufficient for such a purpose. The hyssop with the Jews was not reckoned among herbs, but trees; see 1 Kings iv. 33. and they speak (g) of hyssop which they gather, עץ "for wood;" the stalks of which therefore must be of some bigness; yea, they call (h) a stalk which has a top to it עץ "a reed, or cane;" which observation seems to reconcile the other Evangelists with this: and they distinguish their hyssop which was right for use, from that which had an epithet joined to it; as, Roman hyssop, Grecian hyssop, wild and bastard hyssop (i): and some writers (k) observe, even of our common hyssop, that it has sometimes stalks of nine inches long, or longer, and hard

and woody, nay, even a foot and a half; with one of which a man with his arms stretched out might possibly reach the mouth of a person on a cross: how high crosses usually were, is not certain, nor was there any fixed measure for them; sometimes they were higher, and sometimes lower; the cross or gallows made by Haman for Mordecai was very high indeed, and the mouth of a person could not have been reached with an hyssop stalk; but such an one might, as was erected for Saul's sons, whose bodies on it could be reached by the beasts of the field, 2 Sam. xxi. 10. and so low was the cross on which Blandina the martyr suffered, as the church at Lyons relates (l), when on the cross she was exposed to beasts of prey, and became food for them: so that there is no need to suppose any fault in the text, and that instead of *hyssop* it should be read *hyssos*; which was a kind of javelin the Romans call *pilum*, about five or six foot long, which it is supposed, one of the soldiers might have, and on it put the hyssop with the sponge and vinegar; but this conjecture is not supported by any copy, or ancient version; the Syriac version, which is a very ancient one, reads *hyssop*. The Arabic and Persic versions render it, a reed, as in the other Evangelists; and the Ethiopic version has both, "they filled a sponge with vinegar, and it was set round with hyssop, and they bound it upon a reed;" and so some have thought that a bunch of hyssop was stuck round about the sponge of vinegar, which was fastened to the top of a reed; and the words will bear to be rendered, "setting it about with hyssop;" this they might have out of the gardens, which were near this place, or it might grow upon the mountain itself; for we are told (m), it grew in great plenty upon the mountains about Jerusalem, and that its branches were almost a cubit long. Josephus (n) makes mention of a village beyond Jordan called *Bethesob*, which, as he says, signifies the "house of hyssop;" perhaps so called from the large quantity of hyssop that grew near it:

And put it to his mouth] Whether Christ drank of it or no is not certain; it seems by what follows as if he did; at least he took it, being offered to him: the Jews themselves say (o), that Jesus said, give me a little water to drink, and they gave him חריץ חריץ "sharp vinegar;" which so far confirms the Evangelic history.

30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

When

(e) De Spectaculis, c. 25. (f) Maimon. in Misn. Sabbat, c. 21. §. 3. Misn. Celim. c. 9. §. 4. (g) Misn. Parah, c. 11. §. 8. Maimon. Hilch. Parah Adumah, c. 11. §. 7. (h) Gloss. in T. Bab. Succa, fol. 13. 1. (i) Misn. Parah, c. 11. §. 7. Negaim, c. 14. 6. T. Bab. Succa, fol. 13. 1. & Cholin, fol. 62. 2. (k) Dodonaeus, l. 4. c. 19.

(l) Apud. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 1. p. 171. Vid. Lipsium de Cruce, l. 3. c. 11. (m) Arabes Lexicograph. apud de Dieu in loc. (n) De Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 3. §. 4. (o) Toldos Jesu, p. 17.

When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar] Of the Roman soldiers, who offered it to him, either by way of reproach, or to quench his thirst; and he drank of it, as is very likely:

He said, It is finished] That is, the whole will of God; as that he should be incarnate, be exposed to shame and reproach, and suffer much, and die; the whole work his Father gave him to do, which was to preach the Gospel, work miracles, and obtain eternal salvation for his people, all which were now done, or as good as done; the whole righteousness of the law was fulfilled, an holy nature assumed, perfect obedience yielded to it, and the penalty of death endured; hence a perfect righteousness was finished, agreeable to the law, which was magnified and made honourable by it, and redemption from its curse and condemnation secured; sin was made an end of, full atonement and satisfaction for it were given; compleat pardon procured, peace made, and redemption from all iniquity obtained; all enemies were conquered; all types, promises and prophecies were fulfilled, and his own course of life ended: the reason of his saying so was, because all this was near being done, just upon finishing, and was as good as done; and was sure and certain, and so compleat, that nothing need, or could be added to it; and it was done entirely without the help of man, and cannot be undone; all which since has more clearly appeared by Christ's resurrection from the dead, his entrance into heaven, his session at God's right hand, the declaration of the Gospel, and the application of salvation to particular persons.

And he bowed his head] As one dying, and freely submitting to his Father's will, and the stroke of death:

And gave up the ghost] His spirit or soul into the hands of his Father; freely laying down that precious life of his which no man could take away from him.

31 ¶ The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation] That is, either of the passover, as in ver. 14. which was the *chagigah* or grand festival in which they offered their peace-offerings, and slayed their oxen, and feasted together in great mirth and jollity; or of the sabbath, the evening of it, or the day before it, as in *Mark* xv. 42.

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That the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath-day] Which was now drawing near: according to the Jewish law, *Deut.* xxi. 22, 23. the body of one that was hanged on a tree was not to remain all night, but to be taken down that day and buried; though this was not always observed; see 2 *Sam.* xxi. 9, 10. What was the usage of the Jews at this time is not certain; according to the Roman laws, such bodies hung until they were putrified, or eaten by birds of prey; wherefore that their land might not be defiled, and especially their sabbath, by their remaining on the cross, they desire to have them taken down:

For that sabbath-day was an high day] It was not only a sabbath, and a sabbath in the passover-week, but it was the day in which all the people appeared and presented themselves before the Lord in the temple, and the sheaf of the first-fruits was offered up; all which solemnities meeting together, made it a very celebrated day: it is in the original text, "it was the great day of the sabbath;" which is the language of the Talmudists, and who say (p), שבת הגדול נקרא "the great sabbath is called, on account of the miracle or sign of the passover;" and in the Jewish Liturgy (q) there is a collect for the "great sabbath:" hence the Jews, pretending a great concern lest that day should be polluted, though they made no conscience of shedding innocent blood,

Besought Pilate that their legs might be broken] Which was the manner of the Jews (r) partly to hasten death, since, according to their law, the body was to be taken down before night; and partly that it might be a clear point that the person was rightly executed; for this was not the Roman custom, with whom breaking of the legs, or rather thighs, was a distinct punishment, and was done by laying a man's legs or thighs upon an anvil, and striking them with an hammer (s); which could not be the case here; this seems to have been done by striking the legs of those that were crucified, which were fastened to the cross, with a bar of iron, or some such instrument. Nonnus suggests that their legs were cut off with a saw or sword; but the former seems more reasonable:

And that they might be taken away] Which it seems the Jews had not power to do, but must be done by the Roman soldiers, or by leave at least from

(p) Piske Tosephot Sabbat, art. 314.

lot, fol. 183. 2. sec. Ed. Basil.

Institut, l. 4. c. 26.

P. 110, 114.

(q) Seder Tephil-

(r) LaGantii Divin.

(s) Liphus de Cruce, l. 2. c. 14.

from the Roman governor; and therefore they make their request to him.

32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.

Then came the soldiers] Pilate having granted the Jews what they desired; either the soldiers that crucified Christ and the others with him, and watched their bodies, being ordered by Pilate, went from the place where they sat; or a fresh company which were sent for this purpose, came from the city,

And brake the legs of the first] They came unto, which whether it was he that was crucified on his right hand, and was the penitent believer in him, as some have thought, is not certain:

And of the other which was crucified with him] Who, if the former is true, must be he that reviled him; and was this their position, it was a lively emblem of the last day, when the sheep shall stand at the right, and the goats on the left hand of Christ.

33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:

But when they came to Jesus] Whom they passed by before, and now returned to; this they did not out of tenderness to him, but that he might be the longer in his torture, and whom they reserved till last, that they might use with the greater cruelty and barbarity:

And saw that he was dead already] As they might, from the bowing down of his head, the ghastliness of his countenance, the falling of his jaws, and other signs:

They brake not his legs] There being no occasion for it, nor would it have answered any end, were they ever so spiteful and malicious against him; though the true reason was, and which restrained them from it, divine providence would not suffer them to do it.

34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water.

But one of the soldiers] Whose name some pretend to say was *Longinus*, and so called from the spear with which he pierced Christ:

With a spear pierced his side] His left side, where the heart lies; though the painters make this wound on the right, and the Arabic version of Erpenius, as cited by Dr Lightfoot, adds the word *right* to make the miracle the greater: this

the soldier did, partly out of spite to Christ, and partly to know whether he was really dead; and which was so ordered by divine providence, that it might beyond all doubt appear that he really died, and was not taken down alive from the cross; so that there might be no room to call in question the truth of his resurrection, when he should appear alive again:

And forthwith came thereout blood and water] This is accounted for in a natural way by the piercing of the pericardium, which contains a small quantity of water about the heart, and which being pierced, a person, if alive, must inevitably die; but it seems rather to be something supernatural, from the asseverations the Evangelist makes. This water and blood some make to signify baptism and the Lord's supper, which are both of Christ's appointing, and spring from him, and refer to his sufferings and death; rather they signify the blessings of sanctification and justification, the grace of the one being represented by water, as it frequently is in the Old and New Testament, and the other by blood, and both from Christ: that Christ was the antitype of the rock in the wilderness, the apostle assures us, in 1 Cor. x. 4. and, if the Jews are to be believed, he was so in this instance; Jonathan ben Uzziel in his Targum on Numbers xx. 11. says, that "Moses smote the rock twice, at the first time *וַיִּשְׁרַח מַיִם* "blood dropped out;" and at "the second time "abundance of waters flowed out." The same is affirmed by others (1) elsewhere, in much the same words and order.

35 And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

And he that saw it bare record] Meaning himself, John the Evangelist, the writer of this Gospel, who, in his great modesty, frequently conceals himself, under one circumlocution or another; he was an eye-witness of this fact, not only of the piercing of Christ's side with a spear, but of the blood and water flowing out of it; which he saw with his eyes, and bore record of to others, and by this writing; and was ready to attest it in any form it should be desired:

And his record is true] Though it is not mentioned by any of the other Evangelists, none of them but himself being present at that time:

And he knoweth that he saith true] Meaning either God or Christ, who knew all things; and so it is a sort of appeal to God or Christ for the truth

(1) Shemot Rabba, §. 3, fol. 94. 1, Zohar in Num. fol. 102. 4.

truth of what he affirmed, as some think; or rather himself, who was fully assured that he was under no deception, and was far from telling an untruth; having seen the thing done with his eyes, and being led into the mystery of it by the divine Spirit; see 1 John v. 6, 8. wherefore he could, and did declare it with the strongest asseverations:

That ye might believe] The truth of the fact, and in Christ, both for the expiation of the guilt of sin, and cleansing from the filth of it; both for sanctifying and justifying grace, which the water and the blood were an emblem of.

36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

For these things were done] The not breaking his bones and piercing his side, and that not by chance, and without design; but,

That the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken] Referring either to Psalm xxxiv. 20. *He keepeth all his bones, not one of them is broken*; which, if to be understood of the righteous in general, had a very particular and remarkable accomplishment in Christ; though a certain single person seems to be designed; nor is it true in fact of every righteous man, some of whom have had their bones broken; and such a sense would lead to despair in case of broken bones; for whereas such a calamity befalls them, as well as wicked men, under such an affliction they might be greatly distressed, and from hence be ready to conclude, that they are not righteous persons, and are not under the care and protection of God, or otherwise this promise would be made good: nor have the words any respect to the resurrection of the dead, as if the sense of it was, that none of the bones of the righteous shall be finally broken; and though they may be broken by men, and in their sight, yet the Lord will raise them again, and restore them whole and perfect at the general resurrection; for this will be true of the wicked, as well as of the righteous: and much less is the meaning of the words, one of his bones shall not be broken, namely, the bone *luz*, the Jews speak of; which they say (*u*), remains uncorrupted in the grave, and is so hard that it cannot be softened by water, nor burnt in the fire, nor ground in the mill, nor broke with an hammer; by, and from which God will raise the whole body at the last day: but the words are to be understood of Christ, he is the *poor man* that

is particularly pointed at in *y*, 6. who was poor in his state of humiliation, and who cried unto the Lord, and he heard him, and saved him; and he is the *righteous* one, whose afflictions were many, and out of which the Lord delivered him, *y*. 19. whose providential care of him was very particular and remarkable; he kept his bones from being broken, when others were; and by this incident, this passage had its literal fulfilment in him: or else it may refer to the passover-lamb, a type of Christ, 1 Cor. v. 7. *a bone of which was not to be broken*, Exod. xii. 46. Numb. ix. 12. The former of these passages is a command, in the second person, to the Israelites concerning the paschal lamb, *Neither shall ye break a bone thereof*; and the latter is delivered in the third person, *Nor shall they break any bone of it*; which may be rendered impersonally, *A bone of it, or of him shall not be broken*; or *A bone shall not be broken in him*; and so the Syriac and Perfic versions read the words here; and in some copies it is, *A bone shall not be broken from him*; and so read the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions: and he that violated this precept, according to the traditions of the Jews, was to be beaten. Maimonides (*x*) says, "He that breaks a bone in a pure passover, lo, he is to be beaten, as it is said, *and a bone ye shall not break in it*: and so it is said of the second passover, *and a bone ye shall not break in it*; but a passover which comes with uncleanness, if a man breaks a bone in it, he is not to be beaten: from the literal sense it may be learned, that a bone is not to be broken, whether in a pure or defiled passover." And with these rules agree the following canons (*y*), "the bones and sinews, and what is left, they burn on the sixteenth day; but if that falls on the sabbath they burn them on the seventeenth, because these do not drive away the sabbath or a feast-day." And so it fell out this year in which Christ suffered, for the sixteenth was the sabbath-day. Now in this, as in many other respects, the paschal lamb was a type of Christ, whose bones were none of them to be broken; to shew that his life was not taken away by men, but was laid down freely by himself: and also the unbroken strength of Christ under the weight of sin, the curse of the law, and wrath of God, and conflict with Satan, when he obtained eternal redemption for us: and also this was on account of his resurrection from the dead, which was to be in a few days; though had his bones been broken he could easily have restored them, but it was the will of God it should be other-

(u) Bereshit Rabba, §. 28. fol. 23. 3. Vajikra Rabba, §. 18. fol. 159. 3. Zohar in Gen. fol. 51. 1. & 82. 1.

(x) Hilchot Korban Pesach. c. 10. §. 1—4.

(y) Misn. Pesachim, c. 7. §. 10, 11.

otherwise. Moreover, as none of the bones of his natural body were to be broken, so none that are members of him in a spiritual sense, who are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, shall ever be lost.

37 And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

And again another scripture saith] Zach. xii. 10. which, as the former, is referred to on account of the not breaking of his bones, this is cited as fulfilled by the piercing of his side: *They shall look on him whom they pierced*; in the Hebrew text it is, "upon me whom they have pierced;" the reason of this difference is, because Christ, who is Jehovah, is there speaking prophetically of himself; here the Evangelist cites it as fulfilled in him, that is, that part of it which regards the piercing of him; for that of the Jews "looking upon him and mourning," is yet to be fulfilled, and will be at the time of their conversion in the latter day, and at the day of judgment. And as the piercing of the Messiah has been literally fulfilled in Jesus, there is reason to believe, though the Jews are to this day hardened against him, that that part of the prophecy which concerns their looking to him, and mourning for him on account of his being pierced by them, will also, in God's own time, be fulfilled. Nor is it any objection to the application of this prophecy to our Lord Jesus, that not the Jews, but the Roman soldiers pierced him, since what one does by another, he may be said to do himself: though it was a Roman soldier that pierced the side of Christ, the Jews might desire and urge him to do it; and however, they agreed to it, and were well pleased with it; and just so Christ is said to be crucified and slain by them; though this was done by the above soldiers, because they prevailed upon Pilate to pass the sentence of death upon him, and to deliver him to the soldiers to be crucified. From the citation of this passage it appears, that the writers of the New Testament did not always follow the Greek version of the Old Testament, which here renders the words very differently, and very wrongly; but John cites them according to the Hebrew text, even which we now have, and which is an instance of the truth, purity and integrity of the present Hebrew books of the Old Testament. The Jewish doctors (z) themselves own that these words respect the Messiah, though they pretend that Messiah ben Joseph is meant, who shall be slain in the wars of Gog and Magog; for since their disappointment, and the blindness

and hardness of heart which have followed it, they feign two Messiahs as expected by them; one Messiah ben David, who they suppose will be prosperous and victorious; and the other Messiah ben Joseph, who will suffer much, and at last be killed.

38 ¶ And after this Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

And after this] That is, after Jesus had given up the ghost, when it was a clear case that he was dead; as it was before the soldiers came to break the legs of the crucified, and before one of them pierced the side of Jesus with his spear, though that confirmed it: but it seems to be before these last things were done, and yet after the death of Christ, that Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate, and desired leave to take down the body of Jesus. This Joseph was a counsellor, one of the Jewish sanhedrim; though he did not give his consent to the counsel of the court concerning Jesus: he is here described by the place of his birth, *Arimathea*. This place has been generally thought to be the same with Ramah or Ramathaim Zophim, the birth-place of Samuel the prophet; and so I have taken it to be in the note on *Matt. xxvii. 57.* but there seems to be some reason to doubt about it, since Ramathaim Zophim was in mount Ephraim, or in the mountainous parts of that tribe, *1 Sam. i. 1.* whereas Arimathea is called a city of the Jews, *Luke xxiii. 5.* But if it was in the tribe of Ephraim, it would rather, as Reland (a) observes, be called a city of the Samaritans, to whom that part of the country belonged; besides, as the same learned writer shews from *Judges iv. 5. 2 Chron. xix. 4.* the mountainous parts of Ephraim were about Bethel, to the north of Jerusalem; whereas Arimathea is mentioned along with Lydda, which lay to the west of it, as it is by Jerom, and others: that ancient writer says (b), That not far from Lydda, now called *Diospolis*, famous for the raising of Dorcas from the dead, and the healing of Æneas, is Arimathea, the little village of Joseph, who buried the Lord; though he makes this elsewhere (c) to be the same with Ramathaim Zophim: his words are, *Armatha Zophim*, the city of Elkanah and Samuel, is in the region of Thamna by Diospolis, (or Lydda) from whence was Joseph, who, in the Gospels, is said to be

of

(z) T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 1. & ex eodem R. Sol. Jarchi, R. David Kimchi, R. Aben Ezra, & R. Sol. ben Melech, in Zech. xii. 10.

(a) *Palaestina Illustrata*, l. 3. p. 581.

(b) *Epitaph. Paulæ*, fol. 59. A.

(c) *De locis Hebraicis*, fol. 88. K.

of Arimathea; and so in Josephus (*d*), and in 1 Macc. xi. 34. Lydda and Ramatha, or, as in the latter, Ramathem, are mentioned together, as added unto Judea from the country of Samaria; which last clause, "from the country of Samaria," seems to bid fair for a reconciliation of this matter, that these two are one and the same place: and as the birth-place of Samuel the prophet is called, by the Septuagint, *Armathaim*, as has been observed on the note on Matt. xxvii. 57. so it is likewise called, רמתי "Ramatha," by the Targumist on Hosea vi. 8. as it is also by Josephus (*e*). The city of this name, near Lydda, is now called Ramola, and is about thirty-six, or thirty-seven miles from Jerusalem. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it, "who was of Rama." Some take this Joseph to be the same with Joseph ben Gorion, the brother of Nicodemus ben Gorion, and who is supposed to be the same Nicodemus mentioned in the next verse. The character the Jews (*f*) give of Joseph ben Gorion, is, that he was a priest, and of the richest and most noble of the priests in Jerusalem; that he was a very wise, just, and upright man; and that three or four years before the destruction of Jerusalem, he was about sixty-seven years of age.

Being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews] Not one of the twelve, but a private hearer, who had sometimes secretly attended on the ministry of Christ, loved him, and believed in him as the Messiah; but had not courage enough to confess him, and declare for him, for fear of being put out of the synagogue and fanned him: but now being inspired with zeal and courage, went in boldly, as Mark says, and

Besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus] From off the cross, that it might not be any more insulted by his enemies, and might not be thrown with the other bodies into the place where the bodies of malefactors were cast, but that it might be decently interred. This Pilate, the Roman governor, had the disposal of, and to him Joseph applies for it; which was a great instance of his affection for Christ, and was a declaring openly for him, and must unavoidably expose him to the malice and resentment of the Jews:

And Pilate gave him leave] Having first inquired of the centurion whether he was dead; of which being satisfied he readily granted it; not only in complaisance to Joseph, who was a man of note and figure, but on account of the innocence of Jesus, of which he was convinced, and therefore

was very willing he should have an honourable burial:

He came therefore] To the cross, with proper servants with him.

And took the body of Jesus] Down from the cross, and carried it away. The Alexandrian copy, different from all others, and in language uncommon, reads, "the body of God."

39 And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.

And there came also Nicodemus] To the cross, at the same time as Joseph did; who, whether they were brethren, as some conjecture, and met here by consent, since one prepared one thing, and another another, for the interment of Christ, is not certain. This Nicodemus is thought to be the same with Nicodemus ben Gorion, the Talmudists speak of, who, they say (*g*), was one of the three rich men in Jerusalem; as this appears to be a rich man, from the large quantity of myrrh and aloes he brought with him, and which must be very costly. Moreover, they say (*h*), that he had another name, which was *Boni*; and they themselves observe (*i*), that Boni was one of the disciples of Jesus, as this Nicodemus was, though a secret one, as Joseph: this is he

Which at the first came to Jesus by night] Who, when Christ first entered on his ministry, or when he first came unto him, came to him by night to discourse with him about his Messiahship, doctrine, and miracles, John iii. 1, 2. for being one of the Pharisees, a ruler of the Jews, and a Rabbi or master in Israel, he was ashamed, or afraid to converse publicly with him; however, he went away a disciple; and though he did not openly profess him, he loved him, and believed in him, and now being dead shewed his respect to him:

And brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight] Not himself, but by his servants. This mixture of myrrh and aloes together, and which was a very large quantity, and exceeding costly, was not designed for the embalming of his body, and preserving it from putrefaction; for he was not embalmed, though myrrh and cassia and other odours were used in embalming (*k*); but for perfuming it, and in honour and respect unto him: it was sweet smelling myrrh, and an aromatic spice, called *aloe*, he brought, and not the common *aloe*. Nonnus calls it the *Indian*

(d) Antiq. l. 13. c. 4. §. 9.

(e) Ibid. l. 5. c. 10. §. 2.

(f) Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 1. & 27. 1.

(g) T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 56. 1.

(h) T. Bab. Taanith,

fol. 20. 1.

(i) T. Bab. Sanhedrim, fol. 43. 1.

(k) Herodotus in Euterpe, c. 86.

Indian aloe, which was of a sweet odour; for which reason it was brought. These are both reckoned with the chief spices, *Cant.* iv. 14. *Myrrh* was one of the principal spices in the anointing oil and holy perfume, *Exod.* xxx. 23, 34. It is a kind of gum or resin called *stacte*, that issues either by incision, or of its own accord, out of the body or branches of a tree of this name, which grows in Arabia and Egypt; and being of an agreeable smell, was used at funerals: hence those words of Martial (1)—*olentem funera myrrham*; and so Nazianzen, speaking of his brother Caesarius, says (m), “He lies dead, friendless, desolate, miserable, *σμερτὸς ὀλιγὸς ἡμίμυθος*,” “favoured with a little myrrh.” And so the aloe was used to perfume, and to give a good scent, *Prov.* vii. 17. and Christ’s garments are said to smell of *myrrh, aloe, and cassia*, *Psal.* xlv. 8. Some have thought, that this was a mixture of the juice of myrrh, and of the juice of the aloe-plant, and was a liquid into which the body of Christ was put: but this will not so well agree with the winding of the body in linen, with these in the next verse, where they are called spices. A Jew (n) objects to this relation of the Evangelist as unworthy of belief: he affirms, that this was enough for two hundred dead bodies, and that it could not be carried with less than the strength of a mule, and therefore not by Nicodemus. In answer to which, it is observed by bishop Kidder (o), that we have nothing but the Jew’s own word for it, that this was enough for two hundred bodies, and a load for a mule, and that it should be told what was the weight of the *λίτρα*, or pound, mentioned by the Evangelist, ere the force of the objection can be seen; and that it is a thing well known, that among the Jews the bodies of great men were buried with a great quantity of spices, *2 Chron.* xvi. 14. To which may be added, what is before observed, that this was not brought by Nicodemus himself, but by his servants; and what they did by his orders, and he coming along with them, he may be said to do. Just as Joseph is said to take down the body of Jesus from the cross, wind it in linen, and carry it to his sepulchre, and there bury it; this being done by his servants, at his orders, or they at least assisting in it; and as Pilate is said to put the title he wrote upon the cross, though it was done by others, at his command.

40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

Then took they the body of Jesus] It being taken down from the cross, and carried to the designed place of interment; they, Joseph and Nicodemus, either themselves, or by their servants, took the body,

And wound it in linen clothes] Or “swathed, or “wrapped it in linen;” rolled it about the body many times, as was the custom of the eastern nations to do; this was what Joseph prepared:

With the spices] Which they either wrapped up with the linen, or strowed over the body when it was wound up; these Nicodemus brought:

As the manner of the Jews is to bury] Both was usual with them; both to wind up the dead in linen, hence R. Jonathan alluding to this custom, when R. Hui was taken, and others would have delivered him, said, “*כבוד חסיד בשרו*” let the “dead be wrapt in his own linen (p);” and also to bury them with spices; hence we read of “the spices of the dead,” in a Jewish canon (q): “They do not say a blessing over a lamp, nor over the spices of idolators, nor over a lamp; nor over *הבשמים של מרים*” “the spices of the dead:” the use of which, Bartenora on the place says, was to drive away any ungrateful smell. The wrapping up the body of Christ in a fine linen cloth, was a token of his purity and innocence; and significative of that pure and spotless righteousness he had now brought in; the strowing it with spices, may denote the fragrancy of Christ’s death to Jehovah the Father, in whose sight it was precious, and whose sacrifice to him is of a sweet smelling savour; and also to all sensible sinners, to whom a crucified Christ is precious; since by his death sin is expiated, the law fulfilled, justice satisfied, reconciliation made, security from condemnation obtained, and death is abolished.

41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

Now in the place where he was crucified] Which takes in all that spot of ground that lay on that side of the city where he was crucified; or near to the place of his crucifixion, for it was not a garden in which he was crucified:

There was a garden] All gardens, except rose-gardens, were without the city, as has been observed on chapter xviii. 1. This, it seems, belonged to Joseph: rich men used to have their gardens

(1) L. 11. Epigr. 35.

(m) Epist. 18. p. 781. tom. 1.

(n) Jacob Aben Amram, porta veritatis N° 1040. apud Kidder, Demonstration of the Messiah, part 3. p. 65, 66. Ed. fol.

(o) Ibid.

(p) T. Hieros. Terumot, fol. 46. 2.

(q) Misn. Beracot,

c. 8. §. 6.

gardens without the city for their convenience and pleasure :

And in the garden a new sepulchre] They might not bury within the city. Some chose to make their sepulchres in their gardens, to put them in mind of their mortality, when they took their walks there; so R. Duftai, R. Jannai, and R. Nehurai, were buried, בפרס "in a garden, or "orchard (ר); and so were Manasseh and Amon, kings of Judah, 2 Kings xxi. 18, 26. Here Joseph had a sepulchre hewn out in a rock, for himself and family, and was newly made.

Wherein was never man yet laid] This is not improperly, nor impertinently added, though the Evangelist had before said, that it was a new sepulchre; for that it might be, and yet bodies have been laid in it. See the note on Matt. xxvii. 6. Now Christ was laid in a new sepulchre, where no man had been laid, that it might appear certainly that it was he, and not another, that was risen from the dead.

42 There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

There laid they Jesus therefore] Because it was a new one, and no man had been ever laid there before; and some other reasons are added :

Because of the Jews' preparation-day] Either for the chagigah, or the sabbath, which was just at hand; the Perfic version reads, "the night of the "sabbath;" for this reason, they could not dig a grave purposely for him; for it was forbidden on feast-days; and therefore they put him into a tomb ready made: the canon runs (s), "They "may not dig pits, קברות "nor graves, on a solemn feast-day." The former of these the commentators say (t), are graves dug in the earth, and the latter edifices built over graves; and for the same reason, because it was such a day, they did not take his body to any of their houses, and embalm and anoint it, as they otherwise would have done; but this being a solemn day, and the sabbath drawing on apace, they hastened the interment, and took the most opportune place that offered :

For the sepulchre was nigh at hand] Some say about an hundred and eight feet from the cross, and others an hundred and thirty feet, though some say but fifty or sixty; at furthest it was not far off.

C H A P. XX.

In this chapter we are told that Mary Magdalene went to the sepulchre, which she findeth empty, y. 1—10.

(r) Jechus haabot, p. 43. Ed. Hottinger.

Katon, c. 1. §. 6.

(s) Misn. Moed

(t) Maimon, & Bartenora in ibid.

Mary seeth three angels in the sepulchre, y. 11—13. Christ himself appeareth to Mary, and commandeth her to tell his disciples of his resurrection, y. 14—18. He appeareth to his disciples at evening, y. 19, 20. He giveth them power to forgive sins, and retain them, y. 21—23. Thomas believeth not till himself had seen him, and then confesseth him, y. 24—29. John giveth a reason, why these signs are written, y. 30, 31.

THE first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

The first day of the week] On the sixth day of the week, towards the close of it, Christ was interred; he lay in the grave all the seventh day, and on the first day of the week, rose from the dead: so the women, after they had observed where the body was laid, went home and prepared spices and ointments, to anoint it; but the sabbath coming on, they were prevented; on which they rested, according to the Jewish law: but as soon as it was over,

Cometh Mary Magdalene] Not alone, but other women with her; who had attended Christ at the cross, observed where he was buried, and had prepared spices to anoint him, and now came for that purpose; for not merely to see the sepulchre, and weep at the grave, did she with the rest come, but to perform this piece of funeral service:

Early when it was yet dark] As it was when she set out, the day just began to dawn; though by that time she got to the sepulchre the sun was rising:

Unto the sepulchre] Where she saw the body of Jesus laid by Joseph, in a tomb of his, and in his garden; by whose leave, it is probable, being asked over night, she with her companions were admitted:

And seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre] Which Joseph rolled there, and the Pharisees sealed, and set a watch to observe it. This was removed by an angel; for though Christ himself could easily have done it, it was proper it should be done by a messenger from heaven, by the order of divine justice, who had laid him as a prisoner there. Mary's coming so early to the grave, shews her great love and affection to Christ, her zeal, courage, and diligence, in manifesting her respect unto him: and oftentimes so it is, that the greatest sinners, when converted, are most eminent for grace, particularly faith, love, and humility; and are most diligent in the discharge of duty.

2 Then

2. Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

[Then she runneth and cometh to Simon Peter] That is, after she had not only seen that the stone was taken away, but had looked into the sepulchre, and saw that the body of Christ was removed; for otherwise she could not have said, that it was taken away out of it: upon which she made all the haste she could to Peter; who, where he was she knew, and she was particularly bid by the angel she saw in the sepulchre to go to him:

[And to the other disciple whom Jesus loved] That is, John, the writer of this Gospel: for these two were together, as they usually were; nor were they alone, for the rest of the disciples were with them:

[And saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him] The Oriental versions, the Syriac, Arabic, Persian, and Ethiopic, read, "I know not where they have laid him;" who they were that had taken the body of Christ away, whether friends or enemies, she could not say; nor did she, or any of the women that were with her, know where it was put; whether in some other grave, or was exposed to the insults of men, or to birds and beasts of prey; whether it was laid in a more suitable and convenient place, or in a scandalous one; and whether this removal was for his greater honour, or reproach; to know this, gave her great concern and uneasiness, as she knew it must the disciples also: so Christ, in a spiritual sense, may be removed from his people for a time, and they know not where he is; sometimes he removes himself, to chastise them for their former carriage, to try and exercise their grace, to enflame their love to him, and sharpen their desires after him, and to endear his presence to them the more, when they enjoy it again; sometimes he is taken away from them by preachers, when they leave him out of their discourses; and by their own sins and transgressions, which separate between him and them, with respect to communion; and who for a time may not know where to find him: and for the direction of such, it may be observed, that he is to be found in the ministration of his word and ordinances, in his churches.

3. Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

[Peter therefore went forth] Out of the house where he was, upon hearing the account Mary gave:

[And that other disciple] John the Evangelist and Apostle; the rest of the disciples staying at home and continuing together, waiting to hear what account these two would bring:

[And came to the sepulchre] To see with their own eyes what was done, and whether things were as Mary had related; and to make a more particular inquiry into, and examination of them.

4. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

[So they ran both together] At first setting out, and for a while; not content to walk, they ran, being eagerly desirous to know the truth of things:

[And that other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre] John was a younger man than Peter, and so more nimble and swift of foot, and got to the sepulchre before him; and besides, had not that concern of mind to retard him, Peter might have; as, supposing Christ was risen, and he should see him, how he should be able to look him in the face, whom he had so shamefully denied:

5. And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

[And he stooping down, and looking in] That is, John; when he came to the sepulchre, stooped down to look into it, and see what he could see; he only went into the court, or stood upon the floor, where the bearers used to set down the bier, before they put the corps into one of the graves in the sepulchre, which were four cubits lower; see the note on *Mark xvi. 5*. Hence he was obliged to stoop down, ere he could see any thing within: when he

[Saw the linen clothes lying] In which the body had been wrapped; but that itself not there:

[Yet went he not in] To the sepulchre itself, but waited in the court or porch, till Peter came; and perhaps might be timorous and fearful of going into such a place alone; the Arabic version reads it, "he dared not go in."

6. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie,

[Then cometh Simon Peter following him] In a very little time after him:

[And went into the sepulchre] Itself, though not without first stooping down, as John did; see *Luke xxiv. 12*.

[And seeth the linen clothes lie] As John did; and as by the mouth of two or three witnesses every thing

thing is confirmed, so was this; both saw the linen in which the body was wrapped, but the body was gone; and which was a sign that it was not stolen away, otherwise the linen would not have been left; and besides, it would have taken up some time, and given a good deal of trouble to have unwrapped the body, when it is considered how many foldings the Jews used to wind up their corps in.

7 And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

And the napkin that was about his head] The word *συνδαιον*, rendered *napkin*, is thought to be originally Latin, and signifies an handkerchief, with which the sweat is wiped off the face, and so it is used in *Acts* xix. 12, but Nonnus says it is a common word with the Syrians, and the word, *סורר*, is used in the Syriac version; and which he renders, *κεφαλαιος ζωνηρα*, "the girdle," or "binding of the head;" for with this the head and face of the dead person were bound; see *John* xi. 44. Now Peter, by going into the sepulchre, and looking about him, and examining things more strictly and narrowly, observed that which neither he nor John had taken notice of, when only stooping they looked in; and that is, that this head-binder, or napkin, was

Not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself] And was plainly the effect of thought, care, and composure; and clearly shewed, that the body was not taken away in a hurry, or by thieves, since every thing lay in such order and decency; and which was done, either by our Lord himself, or by the angels.

8 Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

Then went in also that other disciple] John, being animated by the example of Peter, went down into the sepulchre likewise; whither Peter also might beckon, or call him to be witness with him, of the order and situation in which things lay,

Which came first to the sepulchre] Yet went last into it; so it was, that the first was last, and the last first:

And he saw] The linen clothes lie in one place, and the napkin folded up in order, lying by itself in another:

And believed] That the body was not there, but either was taken away, or was raised from the dead; but whether as yet he believed the latter, is doubtful, by what follows; unless what follows is considered as an illustration, especially of the

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faith of John, that he should believe the resurrection of Christ, though till now he did not know nor understand the scriptures that spake of it.

9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.

For as yet they knew not the scripture] Meaning, not some particular passage of scripture, but the writings of the Old Testament in general, and the various places in it which spoke of the resurrection of Christ, either in a way of type, or prophecy; such as *Gen.* xxii. 3, 4. *x.* 13. *Jonah* ii. 17. *Psalms* xvi. 10. *Hosea* vi. 2. *Isaiah* xxvi. 19. and though our Lord had often referred to some of them, at least as in *Matt.* xii. 40. and chap. xvi. 21. and xx. 16. yet such was the dulness of the disciples, or such their prejudices in favour of the Messiah being to continue, and set up a temporal kingdom, that even John, who leaned on his breast, and Peter, who was so inquisitive and desirous of knowing our Lord's meaning in every thing, did not understand the sense of his words, nor of those places of scripture he had reference to:

That he must rise again from the dead] So it was determined, thus it was predicted, and the justification and salvation of God's elect required it; and yet they knew not the thing, nor the necessity and importance of it.

10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

Then the disciples] Peter and John, after they had seen and examined things, and satisfied themselves as much as they could:

Went away again unto their own home] Or "to themselves," as in the original text, and so the Vulgate Latin reads it; not that the meaning is, that they had been out of their minds, and proper exercise of them, and now came to themselves; but they returned to their own company, to the rest of the disciples they left at home, who were as themselves. The Syriac renders it, *לדוכתון* "to their own place;" and so the Arabic and Persic versions; the place from whence they came, and where the rest were assembled together, to pray, converse, and consult together what was to be done at this juncture.

11 ¶ But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre,

But Mary stood without at the sepulchre] She returned from the city to the sepulchre again, following Peter and John thither, who continued here when they departed, being willing to get some tidings of her Lord, if possible. The word

without, is omitted by the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, but is in the Greek copies; and is properly put by the Evangelist, when rightly understood; for the meaning is not, that she stood without the sepulchre, taken in its full extent; for she stood, *וְהָיָה* "in the court," where the bearers set down the corps, in order to carry it into the cave, or vault; she stood without the innermost part of the sepulchre, but not without-side the sepulchre itself; as appears from her stooping and looking into it:

Weeping] That the body of her dear Lord was taken away, and she prevented of shewing that respect unto it she designed; and not knowing in whose hands it was, but fearing it would be insulted and abused by wicked men, her heart was ready to break with sorrow:

And as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre] To see if she could see him, if she and the disciples were not mistaken, being loth to go without finding him: so it is in a spiritual sense, the absence of Christ is cause of great distress and sorrow to gracious souls; because of the excellency of his person, the near and dear relations he stands in to them; and on account of the nature of his presence and company, which is preferable to every thing in this world; nor can such souls, when they have lost sight of Christ, sit down contented; but will seek after him in the scriptures, under the ministry of the word, and at the ordinances of the Gospel, where a crucified, buried, risen Jesus is exhibited.

12 And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

And seeth two angels in white] Matthew and Mark speak but of one, but Luke of two, as here; whom he calls *men*, because they appeared in an human form, and in shining garments, or white apparel; and which appearance is entirely agreeable to the received notion of the Jews, that as evil angels or devils, are clothed in black; so good angels, or ministering spirits, *מלאכי לבנים* "are clothed in white (a)"; expressive of their spotless purity and innocence:

Sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain] In what position the body of Christ was laid, whether from west to east, as some, or from north to south, as others, is not certain; since the Jews observed no rule in this matter, as appears from the form of their sepulchres, and the disposition of the graves in them; some lying one way, and some another, in the same vault; see the note on *Luke xxiv. 12*.

13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou?] Signifying, that she had no reason to weep, but to rejoice and be glad; since, though the body of her Lord was not there, yet he was risen from the dead, and was alive. This they said, partly to rebuke her for her grief, and to comfort her under it: Beza's ancient copy adds here, as in *Mat. 15*, "Whom seekest thou?" and so does the Ethiopic version:

She saith unto them] Without any concern of mind about what they were, and as if they had been of the human kind; for her grief made her fearless, and she cared not who she opened the case to, so that she could get any relief, and any tidings of her Lord:

Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him] And which she thought was reason sufficient for her weeping; could she but have known that if he was taken away, it was by his friends, and was well used, and she could have had the opportunity of paying her last respects to him, it would have been a satisfaction; but nothing short of this could dry up her tears.

14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

And when she had thus said] As soon as the words were out of her mouth, before she could have an answer from the angels:

She turned herself back] Perceiving, either by the looks and gesture of one of the angels, or by hearing a noise, that somebody was behind her:

And saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus] She saw a person, but did not know who he was, by reason of the form of his appearance, the difference of his clothes, and not expecting to see him alive; or through modesty, she might not look wistfully at him; and besides, her eyes were filled with tears, and swollen with weeping; so that she could not see clearly; and her eyes might be holden also, as the disciples were, that as yet she might not know him: so sometimes, in a spiritual sense, Christ is with, and near his people, and they know it not: Christ, as God, is omnipresent; he is every where, and in all places; the spiritual presence of Christ is, more or less, in some way or another, always in all his churches, and among his dear people; but the sight of him is not always alike to them, nor does he appear to them

(a) Gloss. in T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 72. 1.

them always in the same form; sometimes against them, at least in their apprehensions, nor always in a manner agreeable to their expectations; nor is his grace always discovered in the same way, nor has it the same effect.

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? The same question he puts to her, as was put by the angels: adding,

Whom seekest thou? For she was not only weeping for the loss of him, but was inquiring after him, if any one saw him removed from thence, and where he was carried:

She supposing him to be the gardener] Who had the care of the garden, in which the sepulchre was; for not the owner of the garden, who was Joseph, but the keeper of it is meant; she could not imagine that Joseph should be there so early in the morning, but might reasonably think the gardener was:

Saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away] She addresses him, though she took him to be but the gardener, in a very civil and courteous manner; which was rightly judged, especially since she had a favour to ask of him: she does not mention the name of her Lord, but imagined he knew who she meant, being so lately buried there; and suggests, that perhaps it might not have been so agreeable to the gardener to have his body lie there, and therefore had removed it; and would he but be so kind as to let her know where he was put, she, with the assistance of her friends hard by, would take him away with them. So, in a spiritual sense, a truly gracious soul is willing to do any thing, and to be at any trouble, so that it may but enjoy Christ; it dearly loves him, as this good woman did; it early, and earnestly, and with its whole heart, seeks after him, as she did; and absence of him, or loss of his presence for a while, sharpens the desire after him, and makes his presence the more welcome.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

Jesus saith unto her, Mary] He might alter the tone of his voice, and speak unto her as he used to do, calling her by her name in his usual manner:

so Christ has personal knowledge of all his people, and can call them by name; he knows them, and makes himself known to them, before they can know him; and though he may absent himself from them for a while, yet not always:

She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master] It seems, as if she had dropped her conversation with the supposed gardener at once, and scarce waited for an answer from him, but turns herself to the angels again, if she could hear any tidings from them; acting like a person in the utmost distress, hurry and confusion; looking this way and that way, to this or the other person: and now upon Christ's speaking to her, in this plain, familiar manner, she turns herself again; when fully knowing him, she addresses him with the greatest faith and affection, reverence and humility; calling him her Lord and Master, and throws herself at his feet. Thus when Christ is pleased to manifest himself to his people, there goes a power along with his word, making himself known; and a word from Christ, attended with divine power, will give a soul a turn to him from the most excellent creatures, even angels; and when Christ is known, he will be acknowledged with all love, humility, and obedience. The word Rabboni, is of the Chaldee and Syriac form, and signifies *my Lord*, or *Master*; and is commonly applied to one that has a despotic power over another; though all the Oriental versions say, that she spoke to him in Hebrew. The Syriac and Ethiopic, *Rabboni*, but the Arabic and Persian, *Rabbi*. The titles of *Rab*, *Rabbi*, and *Rabban*, are frequent with the Jewish doctors; who say (b), that *Rabbi* is greater than *Rab*, and *Rabban* is greater than *Rabbi*; and a man's own name, greater than *Rabban*: but the word in the form here used *Rabbon*, I do not remember ever to have observed applied to any of the doctors; but is frequently used of the divine being, who in their prayers, is often addressed in this manner, רבונו של עולם "Lord of the world (c)." I conjecture therefore, that Mary used this word, as expressive of her faith in his power and godhead, seeing him alive from the dead; though it might be a name she was used to call him by before, being convinced from what he had done to her, and by the miracles she had observed performed by him on others, of his proper Deity; as the poor blind man expresses his faith in the power of Christ to cure him, by addressing him in the same language, using the same word, *Mark* x. 51.

17 Jesus

(b) Halichot Olam Tract. i. c. 3. p. 25.

(c) T. Bsh. Taanith, fol. 20. 1. Sanhedrim, fol. 94. 1. Abot R. Nathan, c. 9. Berachit Rabba, §. 3. fol. 6. 4.

17 *Jefus faith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.*

Jefus faith unto her, Touch me not] Not that his body was an aerial one, or a mere phantom, which could not be touched; the prohibition itself shews the contrary; and besides, Christs body was afterwards presented to Thomas, to be touched by him, and to be handled by all the disciples; and his feet were held by the women, which is what Mary would have now done: upon the discovery of him, she threw herself at his feet, and was going to embrace and kiss them, to testify her affection and joy, when she is forbid; not as unworthy of the favour, because she sought him among the dead, for which the angels reproved her and the rest; but either because he was not to be conversed with, as before his death, his body being raised immortal and glorious; or rather, because he had an errand to send her on to his disciples, which required haste; nor need she stay now to shew her respect to him, since she would have opportunity enough to do that before his ascension; which though it was to be quickly, yet not directly and immediately; and this seems to be the sense of our Lord's reason:

For I am not yet ascended to my Father] Nor shall I immediately go to him; I shall make some stay upon earth; as he did, forty days before his ascension; when he intimates, she might see him again, and familiarly converse with him; at present he would have her stay no longer with him,

But go to my brethren] This he says, to shew that their carriage to him, being denied by one of them, and forsaken by them all, and the glory he was raised unto, as all this made no alteration in their relation to him, so neither in his affection to them: Mary was a very proper person to be sent unto them, since she had lately been with them, and knew where they were all assembled together:

And say unto them] As from himself, personating him as it were:

I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God] God was his Father, not by creation, as he is to angels and the souls of men, and therefore is called the Father of spirits; nor by adoption, as he is to the saints; nor with respect to the incarnation of Christ, for as man, he had no father; or with regard to his office as mediator, for as such he was a servant, and not a son; but he was his Father by nature, or with regard to his divine person, being begotten of him, and so his own proper Son, and he his own pro-

per Father; which hold forth the natural and eternal sonship of Christ, his equality with him, and distinction from him: and God was the Father of his disciples by adopting grace, in virtue of the covenant of grace made with Christ, and through their spiritual relation to him, as the natural and eternal Son of God: God the Father, is the God of Christ as man, who prepared, formed, anointed, supported, and glorified his human nature; and in which nature, he prayed to him as his God, believed in him, loved and obeyed him as such; wherefore the Jew (*d*) very wrongly infers from hence, that he is not God, because the God of Israel was his God; since this is spoken of him as he is man: and he was the God of his disciples, in and by the covenant of grace made with Christ, as their head and representative; so that their interest in God, as their covenant-God and Father, was founded upon his being the God and Father of Christ, and their relation to, and concern with him; and which therefore must be firm and lasting, and will hold as long as God is the God and Father of Christ: this was good news to be brought to his disciples; which, as it carried the strongest marks of affection, and expressions of nearness of relation; and implied, that he was now risen from the dead; so it signified, that he should ascend to God, who stood in the same relation to them as to him; when he should use all his interest and influence on their behalf, whilst they were on earth; and when the proper time was come for a remove, that they might be with him, and with his God and Father and theirs, where they would be to all eternity.

18 *Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.*

Mary Magdalene came] Directly and immediately, being ready and willing to obey the commands of her Lord, with the utmost cheerfulness; and glad to go on such an errand, and carry such news to his disciples, even though her private interest and personal affection, might have inclined her to desire to stay with Christ:

And told the disciples that she had seen the Lord] Not only that he was risen from the dead, and she had been told so by the angels, but she had seen him herself, and was an eye-witness of his resurrection, and which she firmly believed; this she said, not only with all the marks of pleasure, joy and transport, but with an air of assurance and confidence:

And

And that he had spoken these things unto her] As that he called them brethren, and bid her go unto them, and acquaint them, that as he was risen, he should in a short time ascend to his Father and theirs, to his God and theirs; all which she faithfully related to them.

19 ¶ *Then the same day at evening,* being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

Then the same day at evening] The same day Christ rose from the dead and appeared to Mary; at the evening of that day, after he had been with the two disciples to Emmaus, about eight miles from Jerusalem, and they had returned again to the rest; and after there had been such a bustle all day in Jerusalem about the body of Jesus; the soldiers that watched the sepulchre giving out, by the direction of the elders, that the disciples of Christ had stolen away the body, while they slept:

Being the first day of the week] As is said in *Y. 1.* and here repeated, to prevent any mistake; and that it might be clear what day it was the disciples were assembled together, and Christ appeared to them:

When the doors were shut] The doors of the house where they were; which it is plain was in Jerusalem, *Luke xxiv. 33.* but whether it was the house where Christ and his disciples eat the pass-over together, or whether it was John's home, or house, to which he took the mother of Christ; since he and Peter, and the rest, seem to be afterwards together in one place, is not certain: however, the doors were shut; which is not merely expressive of the time of night, when this was usually done; but signifies, that they were really locked and bolted and barred, for which a reason is given as follows:

Where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews] After their scattering abroad upon the taking of Christ, and after his crucifixion was over; and especially after the report of his body being took away, they gathered together, and made fast the doors of the place, lest the Jews should come in upon them, and surprise them; for they might fear, that since they had took away their master's life, theirs must go next; and especially since it was rumoured abroad, that they had stole away his body, they might be under the greater fear that search would be made after them, and they be apprehended and brought into trouble on that account.

Came Jesus, and stood in the midst] On a sudden, at once, and when they had no thought or fear of any one's coming upon them, without some previous notice; but he being the almighty God, did, by his omnipotent power, cause the bars and bolts, and doors, in the most secret and unobserved manner, to give way to him, and let him in at once among them; when, as a presage and pledge of the accomplishment of his promise, to be with, and in the midst of his, when met together, either in private or public, he stood and presented himself in the midst of them, to let them know at once he was no enemy,

And saith unto them, Peace be unto you] שלום לכם "Peace be unto you," is an usual form of salutation among the Jews; see *Gen. xliii. 23.* expressive of all prosperity in soul and body, inward and outward, spiritual and temporal; and here may have a special regard to that peace he said he gave unto them, and left with them, upon his departure from them; and which he had obtained by the blood of his cross, and now preached unto them.

20 And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

And when he had so said] The above salutation, in the most kind, tender and affectionate manner: and to put them out of all pain, and that they might know certainly who he was,

He shewed them his hands and his side] His hands, which had been pierced with the nails, the marks of which were then to be seen; and which they all knew must be the case, since he was crucified; and his side, which was pierced with a spear, and which left a wide open wound, and which John, who was among them, was an eye-witness of. These he shewed, partly to convince them that he was not a spirit, or an apparition, which at first sight they took him to be, from his sudden appearance among them, the doors being locked and barred; and partly to assure them of the truth of his resurrection, and in the same body, as well as to lead them into a view of his great love in suffering the death of the cross for them; and also to observe to them, from whence that peace and happiness sprung, he had just now saluted them with. It is needless to inquire, whether these marks in his hands, feet, and side, still continue; he was raised with them, that he might shew them, for the reasons above given; and should they be thought to continue till all the effects of his death are wrought, since he appears in the midst of the throne and elders, a Lamb, as it had been slain, and till his

second coming, when they that pierced his hands and feet, and side, shall look and mourn, it is not very unreasonable:

Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord] For by these marks in his hands, and feet, and side, they were fully convinced, and entirely satisfied that it was he; and that he was risen from the dead; and who now appeared to them: than which a more delightful sight could not be enjoyed by them; whereby was fulfilled, what he had foretold and promised, chapter xvi. 22. So a spiritual sight of Christ, is always rejoicing to a disciple of his; that is, one that has learned of Christ, and learned Christ, who has believed in him, and is enabled to deny sinful, righteous, civil, worldly, and natural self, for Christ; and is made willing to take up the cross, bear it, and follow after him: a sight of Christ as God and man, of his personal beauties and excellencies, of his fulness and suitableness, as a Saviour and Redeemer, and so as to have sensible communion with him, is exceeding delightful to such an one; especially when under a sense of sin, when accused or tempted by Satan, or when Christ has been long absent, or when under affliction, and on a death-bed; for Christ is a believer's all; he stands in all relations to him; and such a soul never sees Christ aright, but it receives something from him.

21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

Then said Jesus to them again] The words he said before:

Peace be unto you] Which he repeated, to put them out of their fright, by reason of which they returned him no answer; and to raise and engage their attention to what he was about to say; and to pacify their consciences, distressed with a sense of their conduct towards him; and with a view to the Gospel of peace, he was now going to send them to preach:

as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you]

Christ's mission of his disciples, supposes power in him, honour done to them, authority put upon them, qualifications given them, and hence success attended them; what they were sent to do, was to preach the Gospel, convert sinners, build up saints, plant churches, and administer ordinances. The pattern of their mission, is the mission of Christ by his Father, which was into this world, to do his will, preach the Gospel, work miracles, and obtain eternal redemption for his people; and which mission does not suppose inferiority in his divine person, nor change of place, but harmony and agreement between the Father

and Son: the likeness of these missions, lies in these things; their authority is both divine; they are both sent into the same place, the world; and in much the same condition, mean, despicable, hated and persecuted; and in part for the same end, to preach the Gospel, and work miracles for the confirmation of it; but not to obtain redemption, that being a work done solely by Christ; in which he has no partner, and to whom the glory must be only ascribed.

22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:

And when he had said this] That is, declared he sent them forth in like manner as his Father sent him,

He breathed on them] In allusion to God's breathing the breath of life into man at his creation; or rather, to the Spirit himself, who is the breath of God, and proceeds from him, as from the Father; and who breathes both upon persons in regeneration, and in qualifying for ministerial service, at the instance and influence of Christ: and such an opinion the Jews have of the Spirit of the Messiah, who say (e), that "The Spirit went from between the wings of the cherubim, and he breathed upon him (Menasseh) by the decree, or order of the word of the Lord."

And saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost]

Meaning not the grace of the Holy Ghost in regeneration, which they had received already; but the gifts of the Spirit; to qualify them for the work he now sent them to do, and which were not now actually bestowed; but this breathing on them, and the words that attended it, were a symbol, pledge, and confirmation, of what they were to receive on the day of pentecost: hence it appears, that it is the Spirit of God, who by his gifts and grace makes and qualifies men to be ministers of the Gospel; and our Lord by this action, and these words, gives a very considerable proof of his Deity: the Papists shew their impudence and wickedness, in imitating Christ by their insufflations, or breathing on men, pretending thereby to convey the Holy Spirit to them.

23 Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.

Whosoever sins ye remit] God only can forgive sins; and Christ, being God, has a power to do so likewise; but he never communicated any such power

(e) Targum in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 13.

power to his apostles; nor did they ever assume any such power to themselves, or pretend to exercise it; it is the mark of antichrist, to attempt any thing of this kind; who, in so doing, usurps the divine prerogative, places himself in his seat, and shews himself as if he was God: but this is to be understood only in a doctrinal, or ministerial way, by preaching the full and free remission of sins, through the blood of Christ, according to the riches of God's grace, to such as repent of their sins, and believe in Christ; declaring, that all such persons as do so repent and believe, all their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake: and accordingly,

They are remitted unto them] In agreement with Christ's own words in his declaration and commission to his disciples; see *Mark* xvi. 16. *Luke* xxiv. 47. On the other hand he signifies, that

Whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained] That is, that whatsoever sins ye declare are not forgiven, they are not forgiven; which is the case of all final unbelievers, and impenitent sinners; who dying without repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the Gospel declaration, shall be damned, and are damned; for God stands by, and will stand by and confirm the Gospel of his Son, faithfully preached by his ministering servants; and all the world will sooner or later be convinced of the validity, truth, and certainty, of the declarations on each of these heads, made by them.

24 ¶ But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus] The person here spoken of, is described by his Hebrew name *Thomas*, and his Greek one *Didymus*, which both signify a twin; and perhaps he was one. It was common with the Jews to have two names, a Jewish and a Gentile one; by the one they went in the land of Israel, and by the other when out of that land (*f*); nay, they often went by one name in Judea, and by another in Galilee (*g*); where Thomas might go by the name of *Didymus* with the Greeks, that might inhabit with the Jews in some of those parts: he is also said to be one of the twelve apostles, which was their number at first, though Judas now was gone off from them, and therefore are sometimes only called the eleven; but this having been their complement, it is still retained; but what is observed of him to his disadvantage and discredit is, that he

Was not with them when Jesus came] Beza's ancient copy reads, "he was not there with

them;" and so read the Syriac, Arabic, and Persian versions; he either had not returned to the rest, after their scattering one from another upon the apprehending of Christ; or did not choose to assemble with the rest, for fear of the Jews; or was taken up with some business and affair of life; however, he was not with the rest of the disciples when they were assembled together, and Jesus appeared among them. As it is of good consequence to attend the assemblies of Christ's disciples and followers, so it is of bad consequence to neglect or forsake them: it is frequently to good purpose that persons attend them; here God comes and blesses his people; Jesus grants his presence, the graces of the Spirit are increased, and drawn forth into exercise; souls that have lost sight of Christ find him, disconsolate ones are comforted, weak ones strengthened, and hungry ones fed: on the other hand, not to attend is of bad consequence; neglect of assembling together, exposes to many snares and temptations; brings on a spiritual leanness; leads to an indifference and lukewarmness; issues in a low degree of grace, and a non-exercise of it, and in a loss of Christ's presence.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

The other disciples therefore said unto him] Some time in the same week, as they had opportunity of seeing him, with great joy, and full assurance of faith in Christ's resurrection:

We have seen the Lord] They had not only the testimony of the women, and the declaration of the angels, but they saw him with their own eyes, and beheld even the very prints of the nails in his hands and feet, and of the spear in his side, and therefore could not be mistaken and imposed upon: a spiritual sight of Christ, is a blessing often enjoyed by attending the assembly of the saints; to see Christ, is the desire of every gracious soul; this is the end of their meeting together for social worship; the word and ordinances have a tendency in them to lead souls to a sight of him; and it may be expected, because it is promised; and whenever it is enjoyed, it is very delightful; and a soul that meets with Christ in an ordinance, cannot but speak of it to others; and which he does with joy and pleasure, in an exulting, and even in a kind of a boasting manner; and that for the encouragement of others to attend likewise:

But

(f) T. Hierol. Gittin, fol. 43. 2.

(g) Ibid. fol. 45. 3.

But he said unto them, *Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe*] That nails were used in the crucifixion of Christ, is certain from this place, though no where else mentioned; whereby the prophecy of him in *Psal. xxii. 16.* was fulfilled; for these were not always used in this kind of death. The bodies of men were sometimes fastened to the cross with cords, and not nails (b). How many were used, whether three, as some, or four, as others, or more, as were sometimes used (i), is not certain, nor material to know. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions read, "the place of the nails;" that is, the place where the nails were drove. Thomas knew that Christ was fastened to the cross with nails, and that his side was pierced with a spear; which he, though not present, might have had from John, who was an eye-witness thereof; but though they had all seen him alive, he will not trust to their testimony; nay, he was determined not to believe his own eyes; unless he put his finger into, as well as saw, the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into his side, as well as beheld the wound made by the spear, he is resolved not to believe. And his sin of unbelief is the more aggravated, inasmuch as this disciple was present at the raising of Lazarus from the dead by Christ, and had heard Christ himself say, that he should rise from the dead the third day. We may learn from hence how great is the sin of unbelief; that the best of men are subject to it; and that though this was over-ruled by divine providence to bring out another proof of Christ's resurrection, yet this did not excuse the sin of Thomas: and it may be observed, that as Thomas would not believe, without seeing the marks of the nails and spear in Christ's flesh; so many will not believe, unless they find such and such marks in themselves, which often prove very ensnaring and distressing. Just such an unbeliever as Thomas was, the Jews make Moses to be, when Israel sinned: they say, "He did not believe that Israel had sinned, but said, *אם אני רואה אתי דאמין* " if I do not see, I will not believe (k)."

26 ¶ And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

And after eight days] That is, after another week, that day se'nnight, which, taking in the day in which Christ rose and appeared to Mary Magdalene and his disciples, and the day in which he now appeared to the disciples with Thomas, made eight days; a like way of speaking see in *Luke ix. 28.* compared with *Matt. xvii. 1.* And Dr Hammond has proved from Josephus (l), that the Jews used to express a week by eight days.

Again, his disciples were within] Within doors, in some private house; probably the same as before, in some part of the city of Jerusalem:

And Thomas with them] Which shews their harmony and agreement, their frequency and constancy in meeting together, and their christian forbearance with Thomas, notwithstanding his unbelief; whom they looked upon as a good man, and retained in their company, hoping by one means or other he would be convinced: and it also shews Thomas's regard to them, and affection for them, by meeting with them, though he had not the same faith in the resurrection of Christ:

Then came Jesus] When the disciples, with Thomas, were together; so making good his promise to meet with his people when they meet; and thereby putting an honour upon, and giving encouragement to attendance with the saints. If it should be asked, Why did not Christ come sooner? It may be replied, That the reason, on his part, was, it was his will and pleasure to come at this time, and not before; Christ has his set times to himself, when he will appear and manifest himself to his people: on Thomas's part the reasons might be, partly to rebuke him for his sin, and that the strength of his unbelief might appear the more, and that some desire might be stirred up in him to see Christ, if he was risen. And on the part of the disciples, because they did not meet together sooner; and for the further trial of their faith, whether it would continue or no, Thomas obstinately persisting in his unbelief:

The doors being shut] As before, and for the same reason, for fear of the Jews, as well as for the privacy of their devotion and conversation:

And stood in the midst] Having in the same powerful manner as before caused the doors, locks, and bars to give way, when at once he appeared in the midst of them all, not to Thomas alone, but to all the eleven; and this the rather, because the disciples had bore a testimony to Christ's resurrection, and which he meant now to confirm; and to rebuke Thomas publicly, who had sinned before them all:

And

(b) Vid. *Lipsum de Cruce*, l. 2. c. 6. p. 87. (i) *Ibid.* c. 9. p. 9.

(k) *Shemot Rabba*, §. 46. fol. 142. 2.

(l) *Antiq.* l. 7. c. 9.

mony of others, though they had not seen him themselves. Faith without sight, in other respects, may be considered as opposed to the beatific vision in heaven; and as destitute of sensible communion with God; and as giving credit to doctrines and things above carnal sense and reason; such as the doctrines of the Trinity, the Sonship of Christ, his Incarnation, and the Union of the two natures in him, and the Resurrection of the dead; and as Believing whatever is said in the word of God, upon the credit of his testimony; and which has for its objects things past, as what were done in eternity, in the council and covenant of grace; the works of creation and providence in time, the birth, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ; and also things present, Christ, and the blessings of grace, and things to come, the invisible glories of the other world. Now such are happy that have true faith in these things, for they enjoy many blessings now, as a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, adoption, freedom of access to God, and security from condemnation; they have spiritual peace, joy, and comfort in their souls, and shall at last be saved with an everlasting salvation.

30 ¶ And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

And many other signs truly did Jesus] Besides these wonderful appearances to his disciples once and again, when the doors were shut about them: and which signs refer not to what was done before, but after his resurrection; and which he did,

In the presence of his disciples] For he appeared to, and conversed with no other but them after his resurrection:

Which are not written in this book] Of John's Gospel; though they may be elsewhere; such as his appearing to the two disciples going to Emmaus, and to the eleven on a mountain in Galilee, and to five hundred brethren at once, which other inspired writers speak of: and many there are which he did, which are not particularly written in this, nor in any other book; for he was seen of his disciples forty days, and shewed himself alive, by many infallible proofs: all of which are not recorded.

31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

But these are written] The several ends of recording what is written in this book, in proof of Christ's resurrection, are as follow: one is,

That ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God] That Jesus, who was diminutively called Jesus the son of Mary, the son of Joseph, the carpenter's son, Jesus of Nazareth, and of Galilee, was the *Christ*, or true Messiah; which signifies Anointed, and takes in all his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, to which he was anointed; and is an article of faith of the greatest importance; and is to be believed through the signs proving his resurrection, who, according to the scriptures, was to rise again; and which, by the signs here recorded, it appears he is risen indeed, and therefore must be the true Messiah of the prophets, and also the Son of God; which was a known title of the Messiah among the Jews; and is not a name of office, but of nature and relation to God, and designs Christ in his divine nature, or as a divine person; and is an article of great moment, and well attested, by God, by angels, and men; and receives a further confirmation by the resurrection of Christ, who is thereby declared to be the Son of God with power; and with this view did this Evangelist write the signs proving it, herein to be found. And his other end in recording them is,

And that believing ye might have life through his name] Believers have their spiritual and eternal life through Christ; their life of grace, of justification on him, of sanctification from him, and communion with him; the support and maintenance of their spiritual life, and all the comforts of it; and also their life of glory, or eternal life, they have through or in his name; it lies in his person, it comes to them through him as the procuring cause of it; it is for his sake bestowed upon them, yea, it is in his hands to give it, and who does give it to all that believe: not that believing is the cause of their enjoyment of this life, or is their title to it, which is the name, person, blood, and righteousness of Christ; but faith is the way and means in which they enjoy it; and therefore these signs are written by the Evangelist for the encouragement of this faith in Christ, which is of such use in the enjoyment of life, in, through, and from him. *Beza's ancient copy, two of Stephens's, the Coptic, Syriac, Arabic, Persian, and Ethiopic versions, read "eternal life."*

C H A P. XXI.

In this chapter we hear of Christ's appearing again to his disciples, when they were fishing; y. 1-5. He giveth a great draught of fishes, whereby they knew him, y. 6-8. He dineth with them, y. 9-14. He asketh Peter thrice, whether he loved him, y. 15-17. telleth him by what death he should glorify God, y. 18, 19. Christ reproveth

his question concerning John, *John*, *John*, 20, 21. The conclusion of John's Evangelical History, *John*, 24, 25.

AFTER these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself.

After these things] The resurrection of Christ from the dead, his appearance to Mary Magdalene, and twice to his disciples; once when Thomas was absent, and at another time when he was present:

Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples] A third time, as in *John*, 14. though not to them all; seven are only mentioned, as together, when he appeared to them:

At the sea of Tiberias] The same with the sea of Galilee; of this sea frequent mention is made in Jewish writings (a); see *John* vi. 1, for after the second appearance of Christ to his disciples, they went from Jerusalem to Galilee, by the order of Christ, who appointed to meet them there, *Matt.* xxviii. 10, 16.

And on this wise shewed he himself] The manner in which he made his appearance, and the persons to whom, are as follow.

2. There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

There were together] In one place, in one house, in some town, or city of Galilee, not far from the sea of Tiberias; nor as very likely, far from the mountain where Christ had promised to meet them.

Simon Peter] Who though he had denied his Lord, dearly loved him, and truly believed in him, kept with the rest of his disciples, and was waiting for another interview with him:

And Thomas called Didymus] Who, though for a while an unbeliever with respect to the resurrection of Christ, was now fully assured of it, and, for the future, was unwilling to lose any opportunity of meeting with his risen Lord.

And Nathanael of Cana in Galilee] An Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile. Dr Lightfoot thinks he is the same with Bartholomew, and so one of the eleven. The Syriac version reads it, *Cotne*, and the Persian, *Catneh* of Galilee; no doubt the same place is meant, where Jesus turned water into wine, of which Nathanael was an inhabitant:

And the sons of Zebedee] Who were James, whom

Herod killed with the sword; and John, the writer of this Gospel:

And two other of his disciples] Who are thought to be Andrew and Philip; which is very likely, since they were both of Bethsaida, *John* i. 44. a city in Galilee, and not far from the sea of Tiberias. Andrew is particularly mentioned by Nonnus: so that here were seven of them in all; four of them, according to this account, being wanting; who must be James the less, the brother of our Lord, Judas called Lebbeus, and surnamed Thaddeus, Simon the Canaanite, or Zealot, and Matthew the publican.

3. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing] Which was his business before his conversion; and now having nothing to do, and his Lord and Master having, as yet, no service for him in the ministry of the word, until the Spirit was poured down in an extraordinary manner, which was given to be expected, in the mean while he was inclined to, and resolved upon taking up his former employment; partly that he might not live an idle life, and partly to obtain a livelihood, which was now to be sought after in another manner, since the death of Christ; and these inclinations and resolutions of his he signifies to the rest of the disciples, who agreed with him:

They say unto him, We also go with thee] That is, a fishing; for it seems to have been the business and employment of them all formerly: the place they went to was the sea of Tiberias, as appears from *John*, 1. a place free for any to fish at. This is said to be one of the ten traditions which Joshua delivered to the children of Israel, when he divided the land among them (b): "That any man should be free to catch fish in the waters (or sea) of Tiberias; and he might fish with an hook only; but he might not spread a net, or place a ship there, except the children of the tribe to whom that sea belonged in their division." But now these disciples, or the greater part of them at least, belonging to the tribe and division in which this sea was, had a right to carry a ship or boat thither, and make use of a net, as they did. Besides, there was another reason for fishing here, because there were no unclean fish; for the Jews say (c), that "In a place

(a) See Yalkut, par. 2. fol. 74. 1. & 93. 3. T. Babi Bathra, fol. 74. 2.

(b) Maimon. Hileh. Nezihe Mammon, c. 5. §. 3. Vid. T. Babi Bava Kama, fol. 81. 1. (c) T. Hieros. Avoda Zara, fol. 42. 1.

"a place of running water no clean fish goes along with unclean fish, and lo, the sea of Tiberias is כְּנָח חֲמִים מְחִלִּין חֵן "as running waters."

They went forth] From the house, town, or city where they were, whether Capernaum, or Bethsaida, or Tiberias itself:

And entered into a ship immediately] Which was either one of their own, that belonged to some one of them before their call; which though they had left, they had reserved their right and claim unto; see *Luke v. 3.* or which they hired for their present purpose: the word *immediately* is not in the Vulgate Latin, nor in the Syriac, Arabic, Persian, and Ethiopic versions, nor in Beza's ancient copy:

And that night they caught nothing] They went out in the evening of the day, and fished all night, that being a proper time for such business, and the most likely to succeed in, but caught no fish, or very little: and so it is sometimes with Gospel-ministers, who are fishers of men, though they take every opportunity, and the most proper methods to gain souls to Christ, yet sometimes do not succeed; which makes things look dark and gloomy in their apprehensions.

4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.

But when the morning was now come] The day began to dawn, and light to appear, very early in the morning; for Christ visits his right early, and is a present help to them in their time of trouble.

Jesus stood on the shore] On firm ground, whilst his disciples were beating about in the waves, and toiling to no purpose. So Christ, risen from the dead, is glorified, is in heaven; but not unmindful of his people amidst all their afflictions in this world:

But the disciples knew not that it was Jesus] Though he was so near them that they could hear what he said; but it not being broad day-light they could not distinctly discern him, or their eyes might be held that they could not know him. So Christ is sometimes near his people, and they know it not.

5 Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

Then Jesus saith unto them, Children] And still they knew him not, though he used this endearing and familiar appellation, and which they had been wont to hear from him; and he had called them by a little before his departure from them,

John xiii. 33. and which he uses here as expressive of his tender affection for them, their relation to him, and that he might be known by them:

Have ye any meat?] That is, as the Syriac renders it, מִדָּם לִמְלִיט "any thing to eat;" meaning fish that they had caught; and whether they had got a sufficient quantity to make a meal of for him and them.

They answered him, No] They had got nothing at all; or at least what they had, was far from being enough to make a breakfast of; for so a meal early in a morning may be most properly called, though it was afterwards called dining. Christ's children, true believers, are sometimes without spiritual food; there is always indeed enough in Christ, and he has an heart to give it; but either through prevailing iniquity they feed on something else, or do not go to him for food, or go elsewhere; but he will not suffer them to starve; for as he has made provision for them in the ministry of the word and ordinances; and he himself is the bread of life; if they do not ask him for food, he will ask them whether they have any; will kindly invite them to the provisions he himself makes; will bid them welcome, and bless them to his people.

6 And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

And he said unto them] Willing to make himself known by a miracle, since they knew him not by his person, nor voice,

Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find] That is, a large multitude of fish, as they did. The ship was an emblem of the church in its present afflicted state; the right side of it points to the elect, and where they are to be found in this world; the casting of the net signifies the preaching of the Gospel; the promise of finding fish, the assurance Christ gives of the success of his word, which he owns and blesses for the conversion of elect sinners:

They cast therefore] The net, willing to try what success they might have at the instance of this person, whom they knew not. The Ethiopic version reads the passage thus, "and they said unto him, We have laboured all night, and have found nothing, but at thy word we will let down;" which seems to be taken out of *Luke v. 5.* However, they obeyed his orders and directions, as the faithful ministers of the Gospel do, and should, and succeeded.

And

And now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes] The Syriac adds, "which it held;" being in number, as in *ſ. 11. an hundred and fifty and three great fishes*; which was an emblem and preſage of that large number of ſouls, both among the Jews and Gentiles, which they ſhould be instrumental in bringing to Chriſt, through the preaching of the Goſpel.

7 Therefore that diſciple whom Jeſus loved ſaith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt *his fiſher's coat unto him*, (for he was naked,) and did caſt himſelf into the ſea.

Therefore that diſciple whom Jeſus loved] Which was John the Evangelist and Apoſtle, the writer of this Goſpel:

Saith unto Peter, It is the Lord] Which two diſciples were very intimate with each other, and communicated their thoughts freely to one another. John knew that it was the Lord, either by ſome ſpecial revelation, or from the multitude of fiſhes which were taken, and which ſhewed a divine hand and power to be concerned. So faithful miniſters of the Goſpel know when Chriſt is with them, by his power attending their miniſtrations to the converſion of ſouls. The Cambridge copy of Beza's reads, "our Lord;" as do the Syriac, Perſic, and Ethiopic verſions; and it is reaſonable to think, John ſpeaking to a fellow-diſciple, who had equal intereſt in him with himſelf, might ſo ſay.

Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord] Faith came by hearing, he was immediately convinced, and thoroughly ſatiſfied, having received the hint upon a reflection on the ſurpriſing capture of the fiſhes, that it muſt be the Lord:

He girt his fiſher's coat unto him] The Greek word *καταβύβηκε*, here uſed, is manifeſtly the *מכנחת* of the Hebrews; and which, the Jewish writers ſay (*d*), was a ſtrait garment, which a man put on next his fleſh to dry up the ſweat; and a very proper one for Peter, who had been toiling all night, and very fit for him to ſwim in; and, by what follows, appears to be put on him next his fleſh:

For he was naked] For to ſuppoſe him entirely naked, whiſt fiſhing, being only in company with men, and thoſe parts of nature having a covering, which always require one, was not at all indecent and unbecoming:

And did caſt himſelf into the ſea] The Syriac adds, "that he might come to Chriſt;" and the

Perſic, "and he came to Chriſt;" ſhewing his great love and eagerneſs to be with him; and, as fearleſs of danger, riſks all to be with Chriſt; his love being ſuch that many waters could not quench, nor floods drown.

8 And the other diſciples came in a little ſhip; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fiſhes.

And the other diſciples came in a little ſhip] The ſame that they were fiſhing in, in which they came to Chriſt as ſoon as they could, not chooſing to expoſe themſelves as Peter did; nor was it proper that they ſhould leave the ſhip, and, as it was, might have hands few enough to bring both ſhip and net, ſo full of fiſh, ſafe to ſhore; and the rather, they did not think fit to do as he did,

For they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits] Which was about an hundred yards:

Dragging the net with fiſhes] Towing the net full of fiſhes all along in the water, till they came to land; an emblem of laborious Goſpel-miniſters, who being once embarked in the work of the miniſtry, continue in it to the end, notwithſtanding all toil, labour, and difficulties that attend them; and will at laſt bring the ſouls with them they have been made uſeful to, with great ſatiſfaction and joy, to their dear Lord and Maſter.

9 As ſoon then as they were come to land, they ſaw a fire of coals there, and fiſh laid thereon, and bread.

As ſoon as they were come to land] As ſoon as they were come out of the ſhip, and ſafe on ſhore, not only Peter, but all the reſt of the diſciples:

They ſaw a fire of coals there] On the ſhore, to their great ſurpriſe:

And fiſh laid thereon] Which could not be any that they had taken, for, as yet, the net was not drawn up, and the fiſh took out:

And bread] Not upon the coals baking, but hard by, being ready prepared to eat with the fiſh, when ſufficiently broiled. This was all of Chriſt's preparing, and a conſiderable proof of his Deity; and a confirmation of that proviſion he will make for his miniſtering ſervants, whiſt they are about his work and in this world; and a representation of that ſpiritual and eternal reſtment they ſhall have with him in heaven to all eternity, when they have done their work.

10 Jeſus ſaith unto them, Bring of the fiſh which ye have now caught.

Jeſus

(d) Maimon, & Bartenora in *Milim-Sabbat*, c. 10. §. 3.

Jesus saith unto them] The disciples :

Bring of the fish which ye have now caught] For they might have caught some before, though so few and small as scarcely to be reckoned any; nor were they bid to bring all they had taken, only some of them, to add to these Christ had prepared for them on land; they being both indeed of a miraculous production, and the effects of his divine power. Christ's view in ordering to bring some of them, and put to those that lay upon the coals, was partly that they might have enough to make a meal of for them all; and also, that they might have a more perfect knowledge of the miracle wrought, by seeing the number and largeness of the fishes, and by bringing the net full of them to shore unbroken; and may be an emblem of the bringing of souls to Christ by the ministry of the word, thereby adding to those that are already gathered.

11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

Simon Peter went up] Either to the sea, that being higher than the land, or to the ship which lay by the shore; he went aboard it,

And drew the net to land full of great fishes] Not alone, but others of the disciples with him; though he only is mentioned, being the leading person in this affair; an emblem of the whole number of God's elect being brought safe to shore, to Christ, and to heaven, through various tribulations and afflictions in the world, fitly signified by the waves of the sea. What mystery there may be in the number, I know not. The conjecture of Grotius, that it is a figure of the proselytes in the days of David and Solomon, seems to be without foundation; since they were not only so many thousands, but six hundred over. And as little to be regarded is the thought of others, that the larger number, one hundred, regards the converted among the Gentiles, and the lesser those among the Jews; much better is the observation of others, that it may design a collection, out of all sorts of people, to Christ, and his church.

And for all there were so many] In number, and these so large and big, and the weight of them so great. The Syriac reads, *ܐܬܝܢ ܕܢܝܚܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ* "with all this weight, or burden," and so the Persic; but the Arabic, "with such a number;" both ideas of number and weight are to be preserved, to make what follows the more observable:

Yet was not the net broken] Which must be ascribed to the divine power of Christ; and is an

emblem of the power of God attending the Gospel, to the regeneration, conversion, and salvation of his people, and of the great usefulness of it, however mean and despicable it may be in the eyes of men, and of its permanence and duration; until all the elect of God are gathered in by it.

12 *Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine.* And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.

Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine] One would think it should rather have been said, Come and take a breakfast, than a dinner, since it was so early in the morning: but Grotius has observed, out of Homer, that *απρω* is used for food taken in a morning; so that it may signify here, not what we properly call dining, but eating a morning's meal; and may be an emblem of that spiritual refreshment believers enjoy with Christ in his house and ordinances now, and of those everlasting pleasures they will partake with him in the resurrection-morn: and it is to be observed, that he does not say, Go and dine; but Come and dine; that is, along with himself. He does not send his disciples elsewhere for food, but invites them to come to him, to hear his word, which is food for faith, to wait in his house, where plenty of provision is made, and to attend on his ordinances, and in all to feed upon himself, and to feed with him; to all which they are heartily welcome.

And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord] To ask such a question was altogether unnecessary, and would have been impertinent, and they might justly have been upbraided and rebuked for it: it would have looked like insolence, or unbelief, or both, and that greatly aggravated, when it was so clear a case that it was the Lord; who might be known by his voice and person, especially when they came near to him, and also by the miracles which he wrought: so at the last day, when every eye shall see him coming in the clouds of heaven, none will ask who he is; all will know him.

13 Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

Jesus then cometh and taketh bread] After they had taken the fish out of the net, and all was prepared for the meal, and the disciples were set down to eat, Christ came and took his place as the master of the feast, and head of the family; and taking up the bread, as was his usual method, he asked a blessing over it, and gave thanks for it. Beza's ancient copy, and one of Stephens's, read, "and having given thanks, he gave, &c." which is agreeable to his usual practice at meals.

And.

And giveth them, and fish likewise.] He distributed both bread and fish to his disciples. So, in a spiritual sense, he provides plentifully for his people; gives them to eat of the hidden manna, and tree of life, and leads to fountains of living waters; encourages them to eat and drink freely, what is of his own preparing, and at his own expence provided for them.

14 This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

This is now the third time.] Or day of Christ's appearance to his disciples: he appeared to them first on the same day he rose, and then a second time eight days after, or that day se'nnight, and now at the sea of Tiberias; for within this compass of time he had made more appearances than three, though to particular persons, and not to such a number of the disciples as at these three times:

That Jesus shewed himself to his disciples after that he was risen from the dead.] And thus, as by the mouth of two or three witnesses every thing is established; so by these three principal appearances of Christ to his disciples, his resurrection from the dead was confirmed.

15 ¶ So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

So when they had dined.] The Persic version adds, "Jesus turned his face to Simon Peter;" he did not interrupt them whilst they were eating; but when they had comfortably refreshed themselves, he looked at Peter, and singled him out from the rest, and directed his discourse to him;

Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas.] Not John, as the Vulgate Latin and Nonnus, and some copies read; for this answers not to the Hebrew word *Jochanan*, but *Jonah*, the same name with the prophet. Some have observed, that Christ spoke to him particularly by his original name, and not by that which he himself had given him with a view to his strong faith, as Cephas, or Peter; but it should be known that Christ calls him by this name of *Simon bar Jonah*, when he made the most ample profession of his faith in him, and was pronounced blessed by him, *Matt. xvi. 16; 17.*

Lovest thou me more than these?] Meaning, not than the fishes he had caught, nor the net and boat, or any worldly enjoyment, nor than he loved the disciples; but the question is, Whether he loved Christ more than the rest of the disciples loved

him: the reason of which was, because he had some time ago declared, though all the disciples were offended at Christ, and should deny him, he would not; and had just now thrown himself into the sea to come to him first, as if he loved him more than they did: which question is put, not out of ignorance, or as if Christ knew not whether he loved him or no, and what was the degree of his affection to him; but because the exercise of this grace, and the expressions of it, are very grateful to him; and that Peter also might have an opportunity of expressing it before others, who had so publicly denied him:

He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.] Not in word and tongue, but in deed and in truth; in sincerity, and without dissimulation, fervently and superlatively: for the truth of which he appeals to Christ himself; for he was so conscious to himself of the reality of his love, and the sincerity of his affection, that he chooses to make Christ himself judge of it, rather than say any more of it himself; though he modestly declines saying that he loved him more than the rest of the disciples did, having had an experience of his vanity and self-confidence. He was sure he loved Christ heartily; but whether he loved him more than the rest did, he chose not to say:

He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.] The younger and more tender part of the flock, weak believers, Christ's little children, new-born babes, the day of small things, which are not to be despised, the bruised reed that is not to be broken, and the smoking flax that is not to be quenched; but who are to be nourished, comforted, and strengthened, by feeding them with the milk of the Gospel, and by administering to them the ordinances and breaths of consolation. These Christ has an interest in, and therefore calls them *my lambs*, being given him by the Father, and purchased by his blood, and for whom he has a tender concern and affection; and nothing he looks upon as a firmer and clearer proof and evidence of love to him, than to feed these lambs of his, and take care of them.

16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

He saith unto him again the second time.] Willing to have the expressions of his love repeated and confirmed;

Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?] He leaves out the words, *more than these*, though Nonnus expresses them; he saw Peter's heart, and observed the modesty of his answer, and would not urge him

him any more in that comparative way, only required a repetition of his sincere and hearty love to him:

He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee] Expressing himself in the same language as before; and it is, as if he should say, "Lord, what can I say more? I can say no more than I have done, and by that I abide."

He saith unto him, Feed my sheep] Both the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and his other sheep among the Gentiles, whom the Father had given him, and he had paid a price for, and must be brought in; these being called, he would have fed with the word and ordinances, with the bread of life, and water of life; not lorded over, and fleeced, and much less worried and destroyed; every instance of care and love shewn to these, he takes as a mark of affection and respect to himself.

17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

He saith unto him the third time] That by these three testimonies out of his mouth the thing might be established, and be out of all doubt:

Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me] Is it so indeed that thou lovest me? Is thy love really so hearty and sincere as thou sayest? May it be depended upon?

Peter was grieved, because he said unto him the third time, lovest thou me?] Because it put him in mind of his having denied his Lord three times; the remembrance of which cut him to the heart; and it added to his grief, that his love, which he knew was unfeigned, notwithstanding his conduct, should seem to be suspected:

And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee] He appeals with great warmth and earnestness to him, as the omniscient God, and the searcher of all hearts, who knows all persons and things, and the secret thoughts, dispositions, and affections of mens minds, for the truth of his love to him; for though he knew the treachery of his own heart, and durst not trust to it, and therefore chose not to be determined by his own assertions, and was well aware that the sincerity of his love might be called in question by fellow-christians, because of his late conduct; but as every thing was naked and open to his Lord, with whom he had to do, he lodges and leaves the appeal with him: so every soul that truly loves

Christ, whatever Satan, the world, professors, or their own hearts under unbelieving frames may suggest to the contrary, can appeal to Christ, as the trier of the reins of the children of men, that he it is whom their souls love; and though their love may be greatly tried, and they themselves be sorely tempted by Satan, and suffered to fall greatly; yet their love to Christ can never be lost; the fervency of it may be abated, the exercise of it may be very languid, but the principle itself always remains, as it did in Peter:

Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep] It may be observed from the repetition of this phrase following upon Peter's declaration of his love to Christ, that such only are proper persons to feed the lambs and sheep of Christ, who truly and sincerely love him; and in doing which they shew their love to him: and who indeed would be concerned in this service, but such? Since the work is so laborious, the conduct of those to whom they minister oftentimes is so disagreeable, the reproach they meet with from the world, and the opposition made unto them by Satan, and all the powers of darkness: it is true indeed, there are some that take upon them this work, and pretend to do it, who do not love Christ; but then they are such who feed themselves, and not the flock; and who feed the world's goats, and not Christ's lambs and sheep, and in time of danger leave the flock; only the true lovers of Christ faithfully perform this service, and abide in it by preaching the pure Gospel of Christ, by administering his ordinances in their right manner, and by directing souls in all to Christ, the heavenly manna, and bread of life. Dr Lightfoot thinks that by the threefold repetition of the order to feed Christ's lambs and sheep, is meant the threefold object of Peter's ministry; the Jews in their own land, the Gentiles, and the Israelites of the ten tribes that were in Babylon.

18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.

Verily, verily, I say unto thee] A way of speaking often used by Christ, when about to deliver any thing of considerable moment, partly to raise the attention, and partly for the more strong asseveration of what is spoken; and may have reference both to what went before, confirming Peter's declaration of his love, which would be demonstrated by dying for him, and the testimony of his omniscience, by foretelling his death, and the kind of it; and to what follows after, which contains

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an account of Peter in his younger years, and a prophecy of what should befall him in old age:

When thou wast young] Not that he was old now, and capable he was of doing, and he did do but just now, what our Lord ascribes to his younger years:

Thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest] That is, he could put on his clothes himself, and girded them about him with a girdle, as was the custom of the eastern nations, who usually wore long garments; and as he, a little before, had girt his fisher's coat about him, and walked where he pleased; denoting the liberty of his will in things natural and civil, which every man is possessed of, though not in things spiritual without the grace of God; and also his power of doing what was most grateful to him, without being hindered by, or obliged to ask the leave of others:

But when thou shalt be old] Implying, that he should live to a good old age, and be continued to be useful and serviceable in the cause of Christ, in preaching his Gospel, and feeding his lambs and sheep, as he did; for he lived to the times of Nero (e), under whom he suffered, about forty years after this:

Thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee] This refers not so much to an inability through old age to gird himself, and therefore should stretch forth his hands that another might with more ease do it for him, and which would be the reverse of his former and present case; for the word *gird* is used in another sense than before, and signifies the binding of him as a prisoner with cords, or chains; so *girding* with the Jews, is the same as *קשרו והאסרו* "tying and binding (f)": but either to the stretching out of his hands upon the cross, when he should be girt and bound to that; for persons were sometimes fastened to the cross with cords, and not always with nails (g): or, as others think, to his carrying of his cross on his shoulders, with his hands stretched out and bound to the piece of wood which went across; though his being girded or bound may as well be thought to follow the former, as this: indeed, what is added best suits with the latter,

And carry thee whither thou wouldest not] To a painful, cruel, shameful, and accursed death, the death of the cross; not that Peter in spirit would be unwilling to die for Christ, nor was he; but it signifies, that he should die a death disagreeable to the flesh.

(e) Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 2. c. 23.
Sopher Shorath. rad. קשרו.

(f) R. David Kimchi,
(g) Lipsius de Cruce, l. 2.

c. 8. Bartholinus de Cruce, p. 57. 112.

19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

This spake he] These are the words of the Evangelist, explaining the meaning of Christ in like manner as in chapter xxii. 33.

Signifying by what death he should glorify God] For by the above words Christ not only intimated that Peter should die, not a natural, but a violent death, or that he should die a martyr in his cause, but the very kind of death he should die, namely by crucifixion; and that Peter was crucified at Rome, Ecclesiastical history confirms (b), when Christ was magnified, and God was glorified by his zeal and courage, faith and patience, constancy and perseverance to the end:

And when he had spoken this] Concerning the usage and treatment he should meet with, the sufferings he should undergo, and death he should die for his sake, for the present trial of him, and to see how these things would be relished by him:

He saith unto him, Follow me] Which may be understood literally, Jesus now rising up, and ordering him to come after him; and yet as a sign of his following him in a spiritual sense, exercising every grace upon him, discharging every duty towards him, faithfully and constantly performing his work and office, as an apostle and preacher of the Gospel, in which he had now reinstated and confirmed him, and patiently bearing and suffering all kind of reproach, persecution, and death for his name's sake.

20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

Then Peter turning about] After he was risen, and was following Christ,

Seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following also] By whom is designed John the Evangelist, and writer of this Gospel; who hearing Christ bid Peter follow him, rose up likewise, and went after him, in token of his willingness to serve him, and suffer for him too:

Which also leaned on his breast at supper] "At the paschal supper," as the Perlic version here reads it:

And said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?] This disciple had a peculiar share in the love of Christ, as man, and was admitted to great nearness.

(b) Euseb. ut supra.

ness and freedom with him, signified by his leaning on his breast; and who being so near his person, and allowed to use a liberty with him every one did not take, at the motion of Peter, asked our Lord at supper, who the person was he meant that should betray him; all this is said as descriptive of the disciple here spoken of, which leaves it without any doubt that it was the apostle John; and who, from γ . 2. appears to be one of this company, and is farther confirmed at γ . 24.

21 Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?

Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus] Peter took a great deal of notice of John, and very likely understood, that he meant by his rising up and following Christ, to signify his readiness for service and suffering in the cause of Christ: and therefore says,

Lord, and what shall this man do?] The phrase in the original is very short and concise, "Lord, and this what?" The Arabic version renders it, "And this, of what mind is he?" It looks as if he was of the same mind with me to follow thee; but it is better rendered by us, *What shall this man do?* In what work and service shall he be employed, who seems as willing as I am to serve thee? Or it may be rendered thus, "And what shall this man suffer?" Shall he suffer at all? And if he shall, What kind of death shall he undergo? What will become of him? What will be his end? How will it fare with him? This he said, partly out of curiosity, and partly out of concern for him, they two being associates and intimates, who had a strong affection for each other.

22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me.

Jesus saith unto him] Christ vouchsafes an answer to Peter, but not a very clear one, nor such an one as he wished for, and not without a rebuke to him:

If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?] Meaning, that if it was his pleasure that he should live, not till his second coming to judge the quick and dead at the last day, but till he should come in his power and take vengeance on the Jewish nation, in the destruction of their city and temple by the Romans, and in dispersing them through the nations of the world; till which time John did live, and many years after; and was the only one of the disciples that lived till that time, and who did not die a violent death; what was that to Peter, it was no concern of his. The

question was too curious, improper, and impertinent; it became him to attend only to what concerned himself, and he was bid to do:

Follow thou me] Whence it may be observed, that it becomes the saints to mind their duty in following Christ, and not concern themselves in things that do not belong to them. Christ is to be followed by his people as their leader and commander; as the shepherd of the flock; as a guide in the way, and the forerunner that is gone before; as the light of the world; as the pattern and example of the saints, and as their Lord and Master; and that in the exercise of every grace, as humility and meekness, love, zeal, patience, and resignation to the will of God; and also in the discharge of duty, both with respect to moral life and conversation, and instituted worship, as attendance on public service, and submission to ordinances; and likewise in enduring sufferings patiently and cheerfully for his sake. Saints are under obligation to follow Christ; it is their interest so to do; it is honourable, safe, comfortable, and pleasant, and ends in happiness here and hereafter.

23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?

Then went this saying abroad among the brethren] It not being rightly understood by some one or more of the disciples present, it was divulged with a wrong sense annexed to it among other persons; who, though not of the eleven, yet were followers of Christ, children of God, that belonged to the same family, and were, in a spiritual relation, brethren to each other, and to the apostles:

That that disciple should not die] But should remain till the second coming of Christ, and be found among them that shall be then alive, and be changed. And such a notion not only was among the ancients; but Beza, in his notes on this text, tells us of a strolling wicked fellow, that gave out that he was the apostle John; and was encouraged by some, particularly Postellus, a Sorbonic doctor, but was afterwards burnt at Tholouse.

Yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die, but if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?] These are the words of John himself, the disciple spoken of, who gives a true and just account of Christ's words, freeing them from the false sense that was put upon them; which shews his ingenuous disposition, his integrity and love of truth; being unwilling that such an error should obtain

obtain among the disciples, and pass in the world for truth.

24 ¶ This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.

This is the disciple which testifieth of these things] Recorded in this chapter concerning the appearance of Christ to his disciples at the sea of Tiberias, and what were done by him in their presence, what passed between them; particularly the conversation he had with Peter, both concerning himself, and the disciple John; and also, of all things that are written in this whole Gospel. These are testified to be true by this very disciple John, concerning whom the above report went, upon a mistaken sense of Christ's words, and who himself

Wrote these things] All that is contained in this book, as well as the particulars relating to this conversation of Christ with Peter:

And we know that his testimony is true] The testimony of one that was an eye and ear-witness, as John was, of all that he testified and wrote, must be known, owned, and allowed by all to be true, firm, and unquestionable; and therefore the apostle speaks in the plural number, as being not only his own sense, but the sense of all men. Though some take this to be the attestation of the Ephesine church, or of the bishops of the Asiatic churches, who put John upon writing this Gospel; of which they give their judgment and testimony, as believing it to be a true and faithful narrative.

25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

And there are also many other things which Jesus did] Which refer not to his doctrines and discourses, his sermons and prayers, and the conversation he had with his disciples, and others; on different accounts; but to the signs, and wonders, and miraculous operations, which were done by him, that are neither recorded in this, nor in any of the Evangelists:

The which, if they should be written every one] With all the particular circumstances relating to them:

I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written] The Arabic version renders it, "the things written in the books;" and the Syriac, "that the world would not be sufficient for the books that should be written;" and so the Persic, which adds, "and

"the scribes of the world would fail, or be deficient;" there would not be scribes enough in the world to write them; nor could they be read by men, if they were written; the world would be overloaded with them; and therefore the Holy Ghost has not thought fit to lay such a burden on men they could not bear, as to read such numbers of volumes; but has reduced them into a brief compendium, which may be read with ease, delight, and pleasure; and which is abundantly sufficient to attest the truth of Christ's incarnation, miracles, doctrines, obedience, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, session at God's right hand, &c. and of the whole of Christianity, and all that appertains to it, or whatever is necessary to be known for the salvation of men: for this cannot be understood of the carnal and unbelieving part of the world not receiving and bearing what would be contained in such volumes, were they written; for they are not able to receive and bear what is now written, but reject and despise it as foolishness. Some understand this as an hyperbolical expression; but the sense above given may be admitted without an hyperbole; though an hyperbole may very well be allowed of; nor taken literally will it appear greater than some others used in scripture; as when the posterity of Abraham are said to be as numerous as the stars of the sky; and especially when said to be as the sand by the sea-shore, innumerable, *Heb. xi. 12. Hos. i. 10.* and when Capernaum is said to be exalted unto heaven, or to reach unto it, *Matt. xi. 23. see Gen. xi. 4.* and particularly the Jews have no reason to object, as one of them does (i), to such a way of speaking, whose writings abound in hyperbolical expressions, and in some like to this; as when one of their Rabbins says (k), "If all the seas were ink, and the bulrushes pens, and the heavens and the earth volumes, and all the children of men scribes, *אם כל היםים ינקו, וכל העצים יכתובו, וכל השמים וכל הארץ יתנו כתב, וכל בני אדם יכתבו*" they would not be sufficient to write the law," which I have learned, &c." and it is commonly said (l) by them, if this, or that, or the other thing was done, *אם כן, לא יכלה העולם לשאת* "the world would not be able to bear them." And a later writer (m) of theirs, speaking of the different interpretations given by some of their Rabbins of a certain passage, says, "They are so many, that an ass is not able to carry their books." And the intention of this expression, supposing it hyperbolical, is to shew, that but a few of the wonderful things

(i) Jacob Aben ben Amram, porta veritatis, No 1094. apud Kilder, Demonstration of the Messiah, par. 3. p. 67. Ed. fol.

(k) Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 4. 2.

(l) Zohar in Exod. fol. 106. 4. & in Lev. fol. 26. 2. & 49. 3. & in Num. fol. 52. 2. & 59. 3. & 63. 3. & 64. 4. & 82. 3. 4.

(m) R. Abraham Seba in Tzeror Hammor, fol. 79. 1.

things done by Christ were recorded by the Evangelist, in comparison of the many which he every day did, in all places where he came; for he was continually going about doing good, and healing all manner of diseases; but these that were written are sufficient to prove him to be the true Messiah, and to require faith in him as such. To all which the Evangelist sets his

Amen] As attesting and confirming the truth of all he had written; and which may be depended upon, and assented to, as truth, by all that read

this Gospel. The Alexandrian copy, and Beza's Cambridge copy have not the word *Amen*; nor have the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Perfic versions. In some copies the following words are added, "the Gospel according to John was given out thirty-two years after the ascension of Christ;" which would fall on the year of Christ 66, and so before the destruction of Jerusalem; which is contrary to the common opinion of learned men, some placing it in the year 97, others in the year 99.

7 AP 53

THE END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

